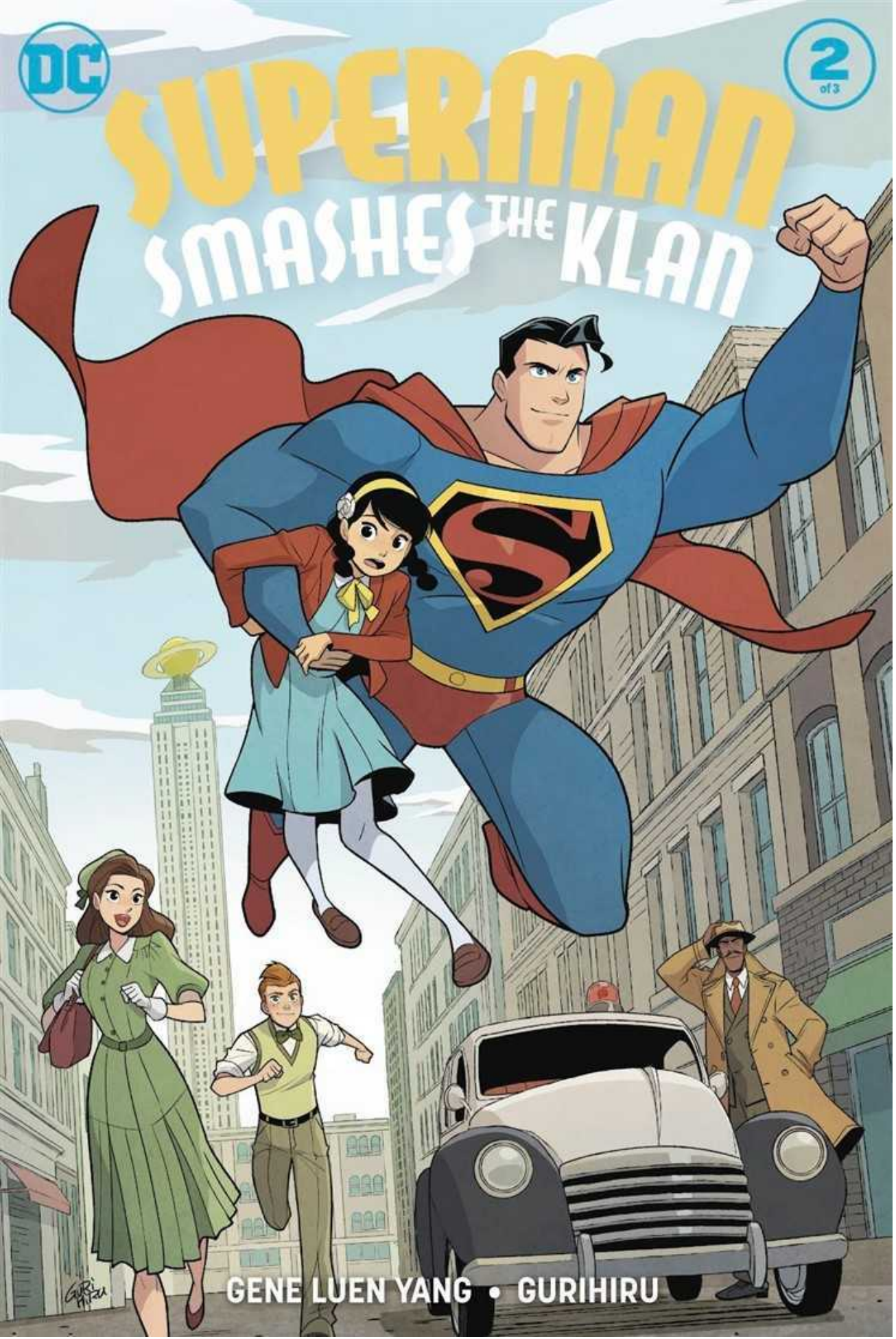
DC
2
of 3
SUPERMAN
SMASHES THE KLAN
GENE LUEN YANG • GURIHIRU

SUPERMAN SMASHES THE KLAN

PART TWO

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SUPERMAN SMASHES THE KLAN PART TWO

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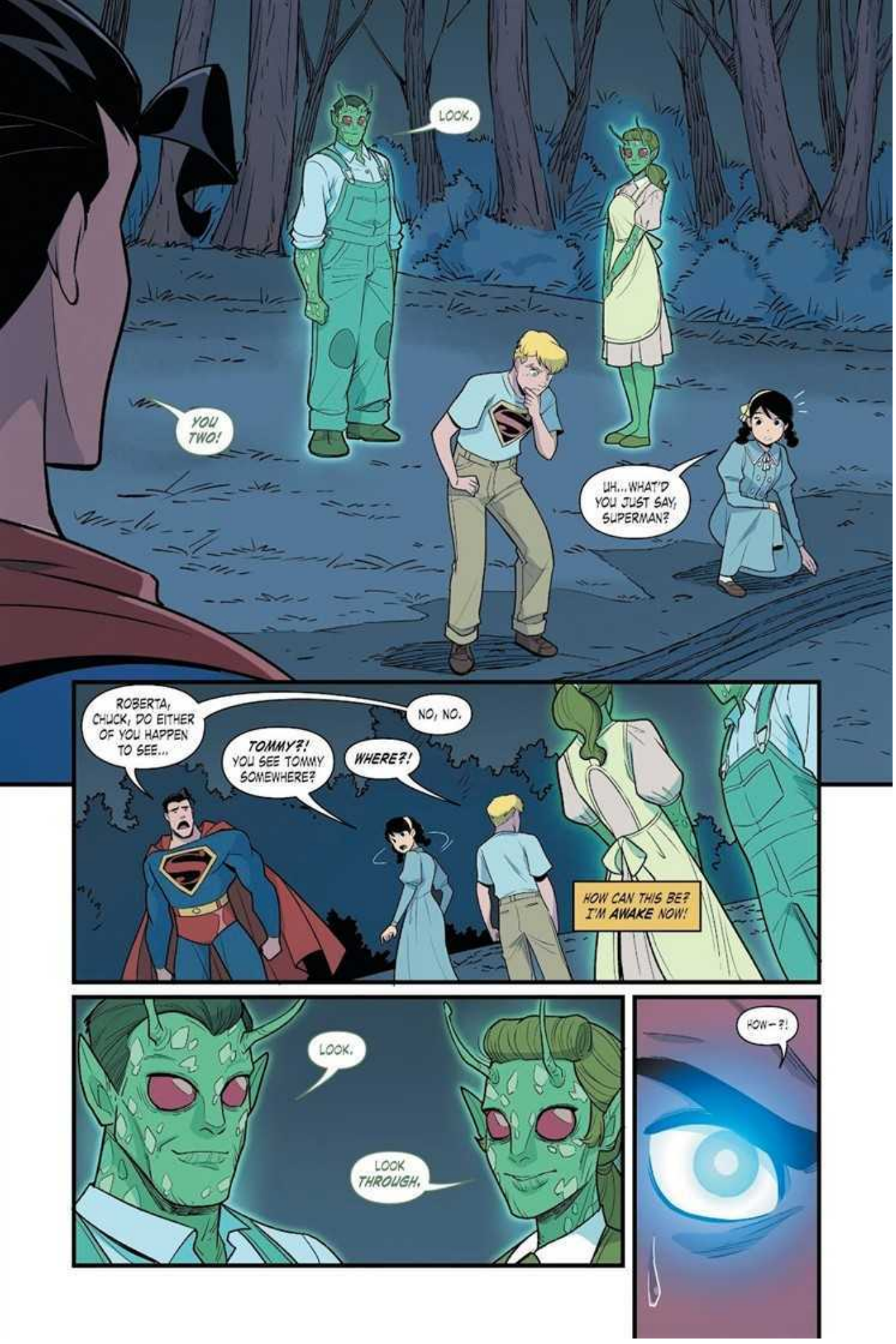
THERE, SUPERMAN! OVER THAT RIVER! THAT'S WHERE THE MEETING WAS!
THE MEETING OF BIGOTS IN BEDSHEETS, CHUCK?
GASP
NHH...
HEY, I'M ALREADY TRYING TO HELP! YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO DISRESPECTFUL OF—
KIDS, LET'S STAY FOCUSED ON FINDING TOMMY!
HANG TIGHT!
UH, SUPERMAN? PLEASE DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GONNA—

HA HA!
--JUMP OVER THAT RIVER!
LEAP!

BEST MOMENT OF MY WHOLE LIFE!
UGH...
BLARF!-
ROBERTA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
GURGLY STOMACH. I'LL BE FINE.
NOBODY'S HERE. I THOUGHT FOR SURE...
LOOK! THESE TIRE TRACKS ARE FRESH!
WHOEVER MADE THEM MIGHT STILL BE AROUND!
I LISTEN FOR A CAR ENGINE, FOOTSTEPS, VOICES...
NOTHING.
DON'T JUST LISTEN.


LOOK.
YOU TWO!
UH... WHAT'D YOU JUST SAY, SUPERMAN?
ROBERTA, CHUCK, DO EITHER OF YOU HAPPEN TO SEE...
NO, NO.
TOMMY?! YOU SEE TOMMY SOMEWHERE?
WHERE?!
HOW CAN THIS BE? I'M AWAKE NOW!
LOOK.
LOOK THROUGH.
HOW—?!

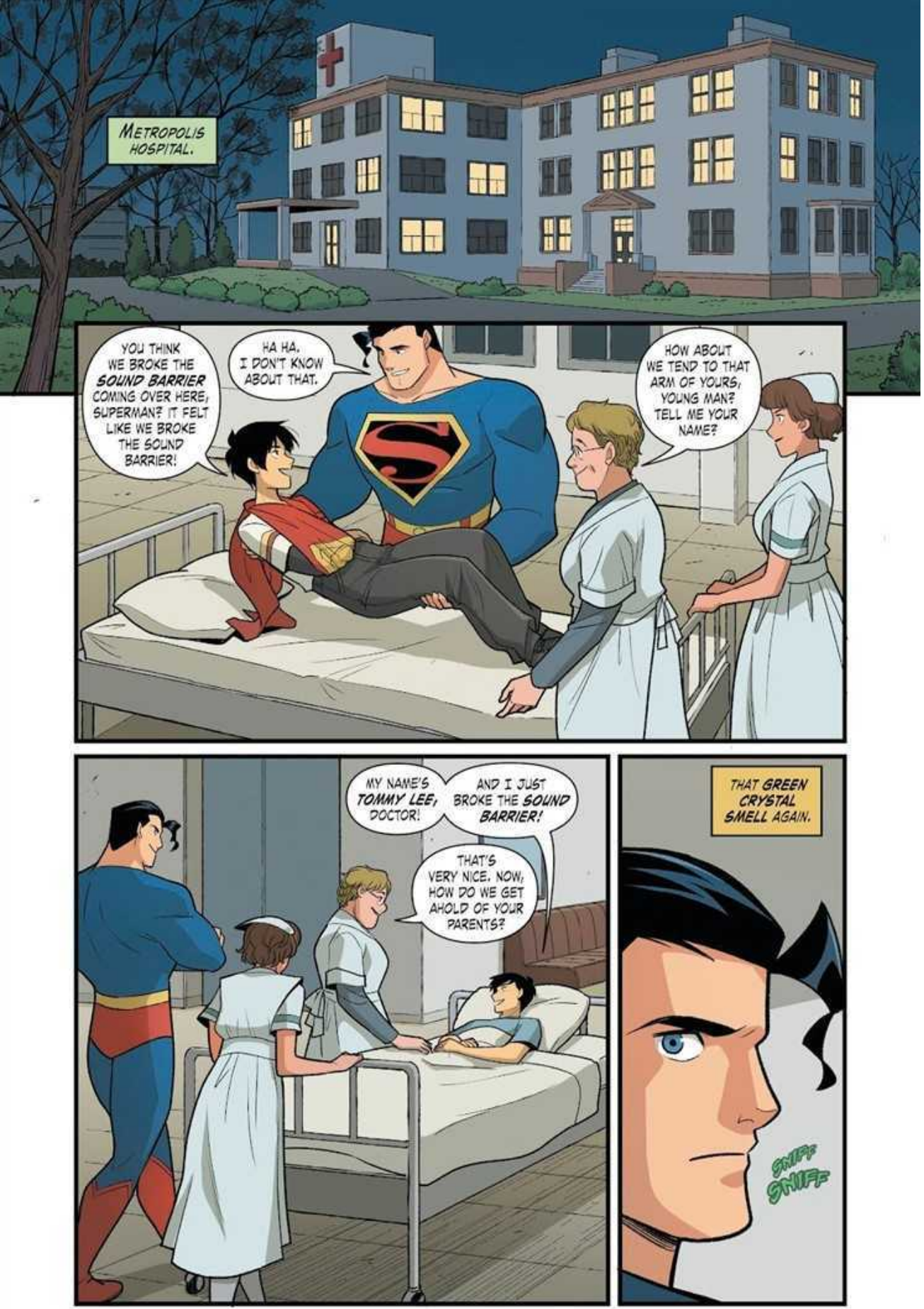
FOR JUST A MOMENT, THE ROCKS, THE BUSHES, EVEN THE GROUND I'M STANDING ON—
—ALL LOOK AS IF THEY'RE MADE OF GLASS.
HE'S IN THE RIVER!

SEEING THROUGH ROCKS—
—I SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO THAT.
TOMMY!
OH, THANK GOD!
TOMMY...?
SAY SOMETHING!
COUGH! COUGH!
HOW COME YOUR BREATH...
SMELLS LIKE BARF..?
DUMMY. I'M SO HAPPY YOU'RE ALIVE I'M GONNA LET THAT ONE GO.
OW! MY ARM!
CAREFUL, ROBERTA! IT MIGHT BE BROKEN!
YOU CAN KNOW FOR SURE. TAKE A LOOK AT HIS BONE.
LOOK THROUGH.
WHOA... SUPERMAN'S HERE?!
THEY'RE STILL HERE.
MINDING YOURSELF TOO MUCH IS A GOOD WAY TO LOSE YOUR MIND, CLARK.

STAY FOCUSED ON TOMMY.
TOMMY, WHEN YOU TRY TO MOVE IT, DOES IT FEEL LIKE THE WORST PAIN EVER?
HNN... PRETTY MUCH...
I BET IT'S BROKEN. WE GOTTA GET THAT ARM IN A SLING. WE CAN USE MY SHIRT—
NO, LET'S USE MY CAPE.
SUPERMAN! LOOK WHO I BROUGHT WITH ME!
GOOD MAN, JIMMY!
INSPECTOR HENDERSON, I HAVE TO GET TOMMY TO THE HOSPITAL AS QUICK AS I CAN! CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF ROBERTA AND CHUCK?
YOU GOT IT, BIG GUY. NO—
—PROBLEM.
FWOOOSH

THIS CAR RIDE SEEMS TO BE OKAY. MAYBE I'M ALL OUT OF BARF FOR THE NIGHT.
PLUS, I KEEP THINKING BACK TO THAT LEAP WE TOOK OVER THE RIVER WITH SUPERMAN.
I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE NOTICED IF I'D HAD A STURDIER STOMACH, BUT THE WAY WE LANDED WAS JUST... WEIRD.
I BARELY FELT IT WHEN SUPERMAN'S FEET TOUCHED THE GROUND, LIKE THE LAWS OF GRAVITY DIDN'T APPLY TO HIM.
YOU GOTTA DO WHAT'S RIGHT, CHUCK! TELL US EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT!
I TOLD YOU ALREADY, I DON'T KNOW NOTHIN', JIMMY!
SORRY YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO WRITE A FANCY STORY ABOUT IT FOR THE PLANET!
YOU KNOW THIS ISN'T ABOUT THAT!
BECAUSE IT'S ABOUT MY FAMILY! SPILL, CHUCK!
AHEM.
KIDS, LISTEN. THE THREE OF YOU HAVE HAD A PRETTY ROUGH NIGHT.
HOW ABOUT WE GIVE EACH OTHER SOME SPACE?

AND, YOUNG MAN... CHUCK. FROM WHAT I SAW, SUPERMAN COULDN'T HAVE SAVED YOUR FRIEND WITHOUT YOU. IS THAT RIGHT?
TOMMY ISN'T HIS FRIEND!
BUT IT'S TRUE. IF CHUCK HADN'T TAKEN US TO THAT SPOT, TOMMY MIGHT NOT HAVE MADE IT.
SEEMS TO ME YOU'VE ALREADY DONE WHAT'S RIGHT.
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT. AFTER I DROP ROBERTA OFF AT THE HOSPITAL, I'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR HOME. YOU GET A GOOD NIGHT'S REST.
I'LL COME BY IN THE MORNING AND WE CAN HAVE A CHAT.
OKAY BY YOU?
YEAH.
I MEAN, YES.
YES, SIR.


METROPOLIS HOSPITAL.
YOU THINK WE BROKE THE SOUND BARRIER COMING OVER HERE, SUPERMAN? IT FELT LIKE WE BROKE THE SOUND BARRIER!
HA HA. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.
HOW ABOUT WE TEND TO THAT ARM OF YOURS, YOUNG MAN? TELL ME YOUR NAME?
MY NAME'S TOMMY LEE, DOCTOR!
AND I JUST BROKE THE SOUND BARRIER!
THAT'S VERY NICE. NOW, HOW DO WE GET AHOLD OF YOUR PARENTS?
THAT GREEN CRYSTAL SMELL AGAIN.
SNIFF SNIFF

SIGH.
THEY'VE CHANGED OUTFITS.
SPECTACULAR JOB SAVING THAT BOY!
WE'RE SO PROUD!
TELL ME THE TRUTH. ARE YOU SOME SORT OF TRICK BY LUTHOR? OR DER TEUFEL?
OH, WE'RE NO TRICK.
THEN WHAT ARE YOU?
COME, NOW. HAVEN'T YOU FIGURED IT OUT?
WE'RE YOUR PARENTS.

BEFORE WE SENT YOU HERE, WE THEORIZED THAT THIS PLANET'S YELLOW SUN WOULD GIVE YOU POWERS BEYOND IMAGINING.
IT SEEMS WE WERE CORRECT.
NO. WHAT YOU'RE SAYING CAN'T BE TRUE!
I—I DON'T LOOK A THING LIKE YOU!
THOUGH YOU WERE IGNORANT OF THEIR SOURCE, YOU'VE ALWAYS KNOWN THAT YOU HAVE POWERS.
YOU ARE OBVIOUSLY STRONGER AND FASTER THAN THEY.
BUT THEN, WHY ARE YOU WILLING TO USE SOME OF YOUR POWERS, BUT NOT OTHERS?
AND JUST LIKE THAT—

MORE MEMORIES COME RUSHING BACK.
SMALLVILLE. 1926.
THAT BOY IS DEMON POSSESSED, I TELL YOU!
HOW ELSE DO YOU EXPLAIN WHAT MY BOYS SAW?!

H-HE FLOATED UP IN THE—
THE BIBLE CALLS IT *LEVITATION.*
HE LEVITATIONED UP IN THE AIR!
AND THE *FIRES OF HELL* SHOT OUT FROM HIS EYES!
PLEASE, MRS. BRAVERMAN, CALM DOWN. I'M SURE WE CAN—

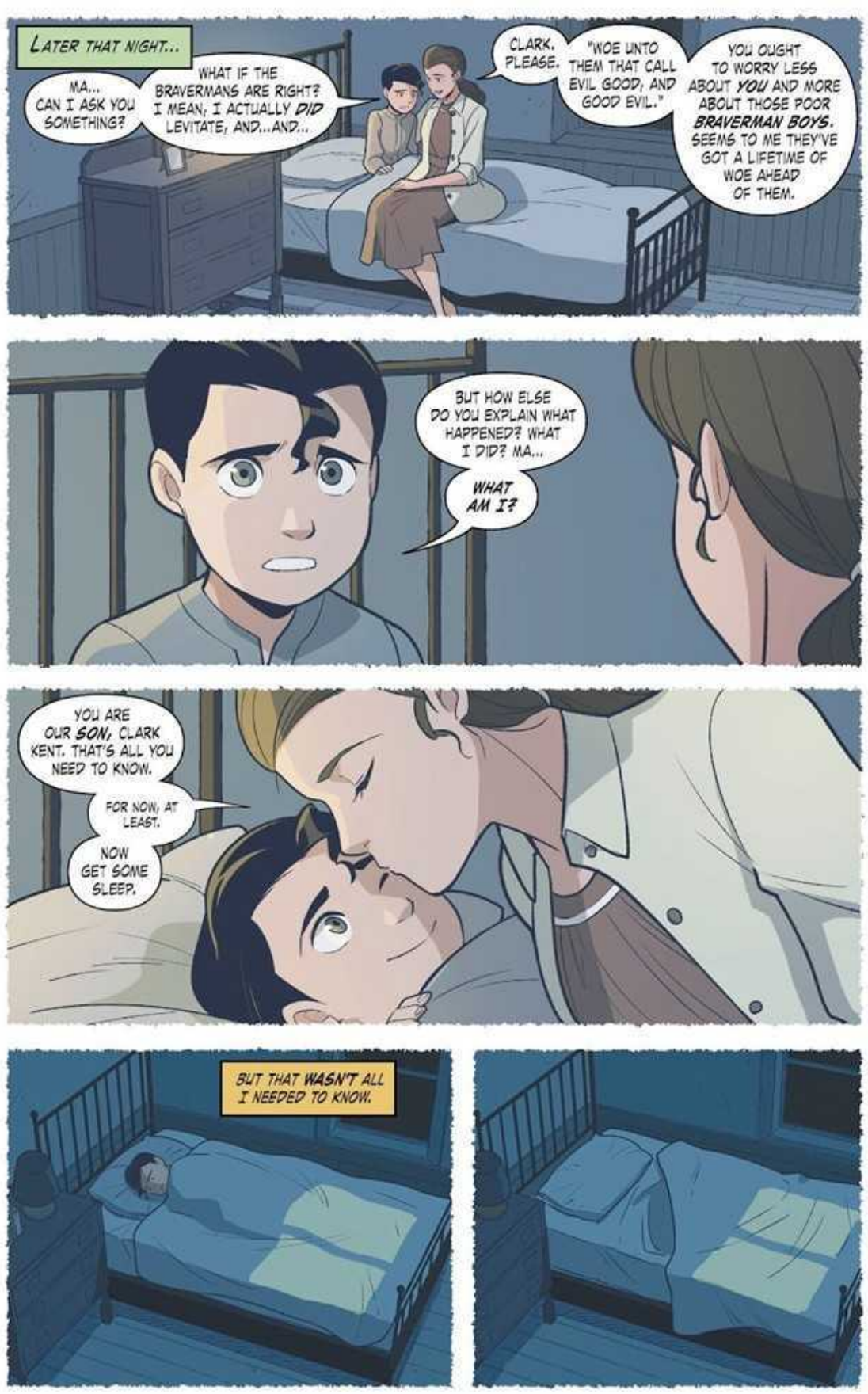
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO *CALM DOWN* WHEN THERE'S A VERITABLE *DEMON* HERE IN OUR MIDST?!
IT AND ITS HOST MUST BE *EXORCISED* FROM SMALLVILLE!
EVENING, FOLKS.

ABOUT TIME YOU SHOWED UP, SHERIFF!
THE KENT BOY IS POSSESSED BY A *DEMON!* EARLIER TODAY, KENNY AND KYLE SAW HIM PERFORM ALL MANNER OF *SUPERNATURAL DEVILRY!*

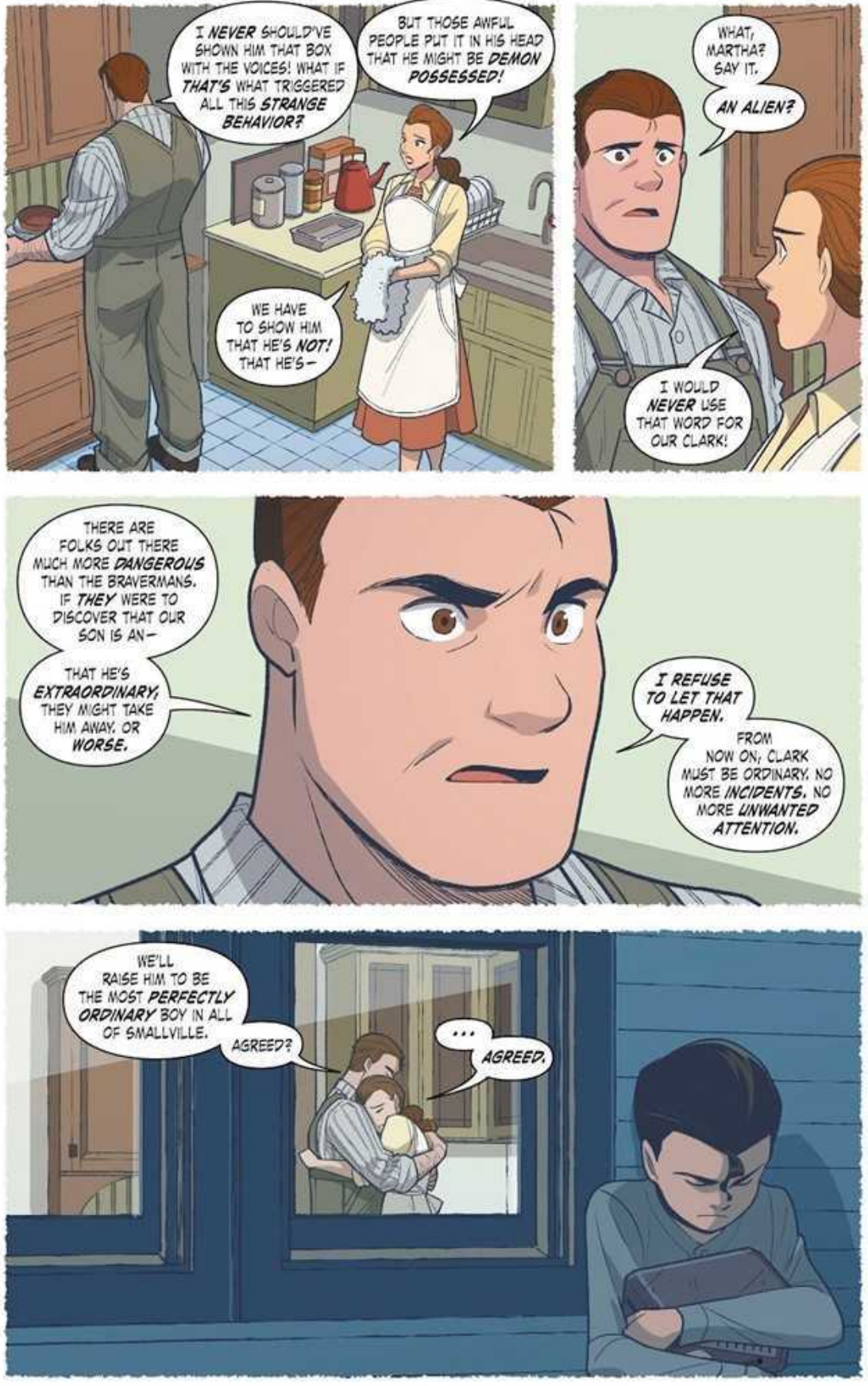
SHOULDN'T YOU HAVE CALLED ON PASTOR LEONE INSTEAD?
THAT LOUT IS ALWAYS TRYING TO AVOID ME!
YOU DON'T SAY.

I CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE, MRS. BRAVERMAN. HOW ABOUT YOU ALL HEAD HOME?
GOOD THINKING, SHERIFF!
NEVER KNOW WHEN A POSSESSED BOY MIGHT GET A HANKERING FOR *HUMAN FLESH!*

CLARK KENT.
STEP FORWARD, PLEASE.
=SNIFF SNIFF=
HM. NOT A HINT OF BRIMSTONE.
HOW ABOUT YOU PERFORM A BIT OF THAT SUPERNATURAL DEVILRY FOR ME, SON?
I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT I—
NOW WAIT ONE MINUTE! ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT YOU ARE ENTIRELY INCAPABLE OF SUPERNATURAL DEVILRY?!
WELL, THEN, I HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS BOY IS NOT POSSESSED BY A DEMON!
THANK YOU, SHERIFF.
I'VE KNOWN CLARK PRETTY MUCH ALL HIS LIFE, MARTHA. HE'S ALWAYS LOOKING TO HELP, NEVER ANY TROUBLE.
IF THAT BOY'S GOT A DEMON IN HIM, IT'S JUST ABOUT THE LOUSIEST DEMON IN ALL CREATION.
WE APPRECIATE IT, TRULY.
HEY, THIS IS SMALLVILLE. WE LOOK AFTER OUR OWN.
THAT INCLUDES YOU FOLKS, OF COURSE. AND, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, THAT INCLUDES THE BRAVERMANS, TOO.
I'LL GO SEE IF I CAN TALK SOME SENSE INTO 'EM.

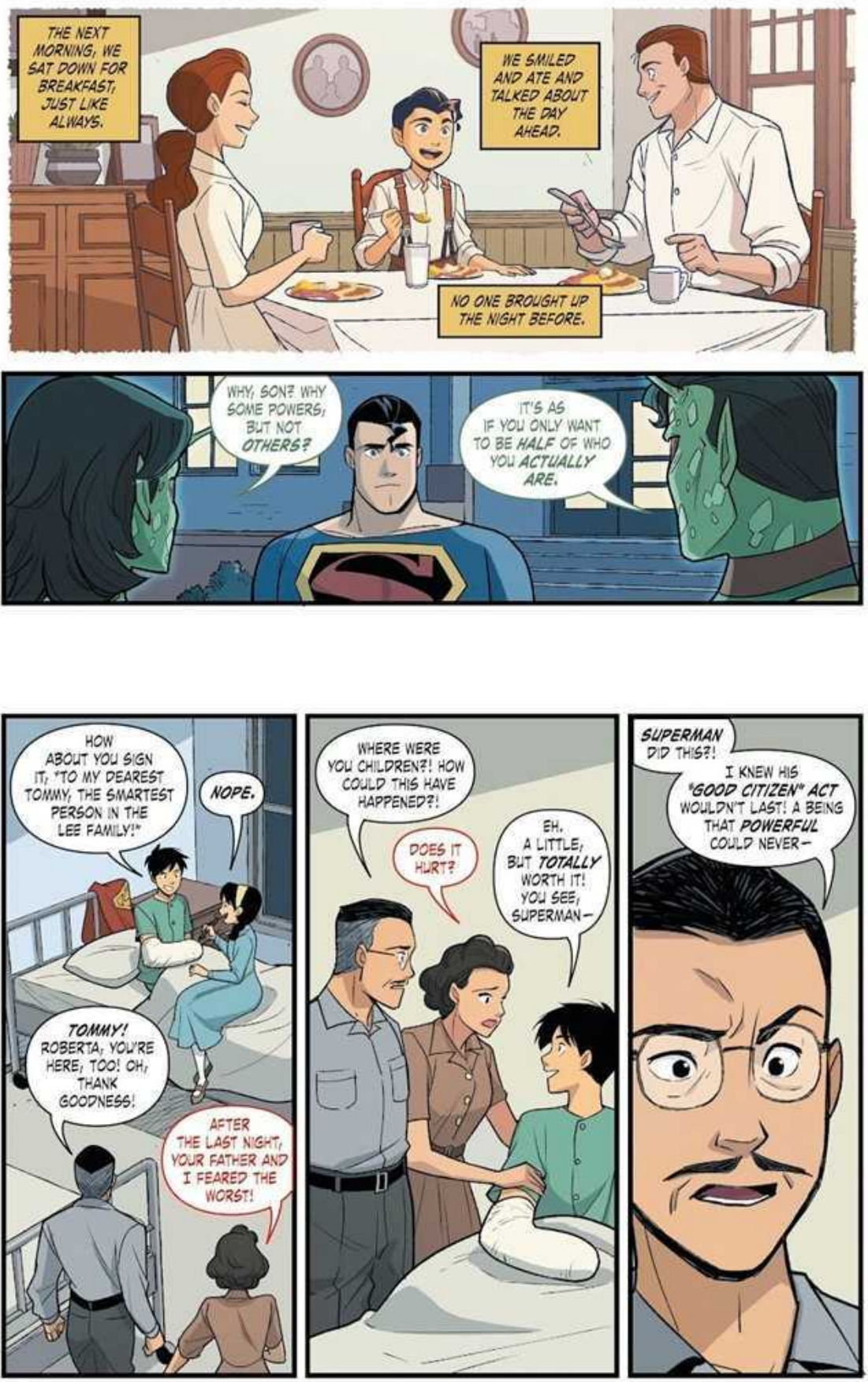

LATER THAT NIGHT...
MA... CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
WHAT IF THE BRAVERMANS ARE RIGHT? I MEAN, I ACTUALLY DID LEVITATE, AND...AND...
CLARK. PLEASE.
"WOE UNTO THEM THAT CALL EVIL GOOD, AND GOOD EVIL."
YOU OUGHT TO WORRY LESS ABOUT YOU AND MORE ABOUT THOSE POOR BRAVERMAN BOYS. SEEMS TO ME THEY'VE GOT A LIFETIME OF WOE AHEAD OF THEM.
BUT HOW ELSE DO YOU EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT I DID? MA...
WHAT AM I?
YOU ARE OUR SON, CLARK KENT. THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW.
FOR NOW, AT LEAST.
NOW GET SOME SLEEP.
BUT THAT WASN'T ALL I NEEDED TO KNOW.

I SNUCK INTO PA'S WORK SHED FOR A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ONLY CLUE I HAD.
IF I COULD HEAR THOSE WEIRD VOICES AGAIN, I THOUGHT, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE SENSE OF THEM.
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE SENSE OF ME.
BUT I COULDN'T GET THE THING TO TURN ON.
I DECIDED TO BRING IT TO PA. SURE, IT WAS LATE, BUT HE'D NEVER BEEN ONE TO TURN AWAY MY CURIOSITY.
I COULD HEAR THEM THROUGH THE WINDOW.
MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, YOU WERE RIGHT, JONATHAN. IT'S TIME TO TELL HIM WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT... YOU KNOW. THE TRUTH.
NO, MARTHA. I WAS WRONG. WE'VE ALREADY TOLD HIM TOO MUCH.

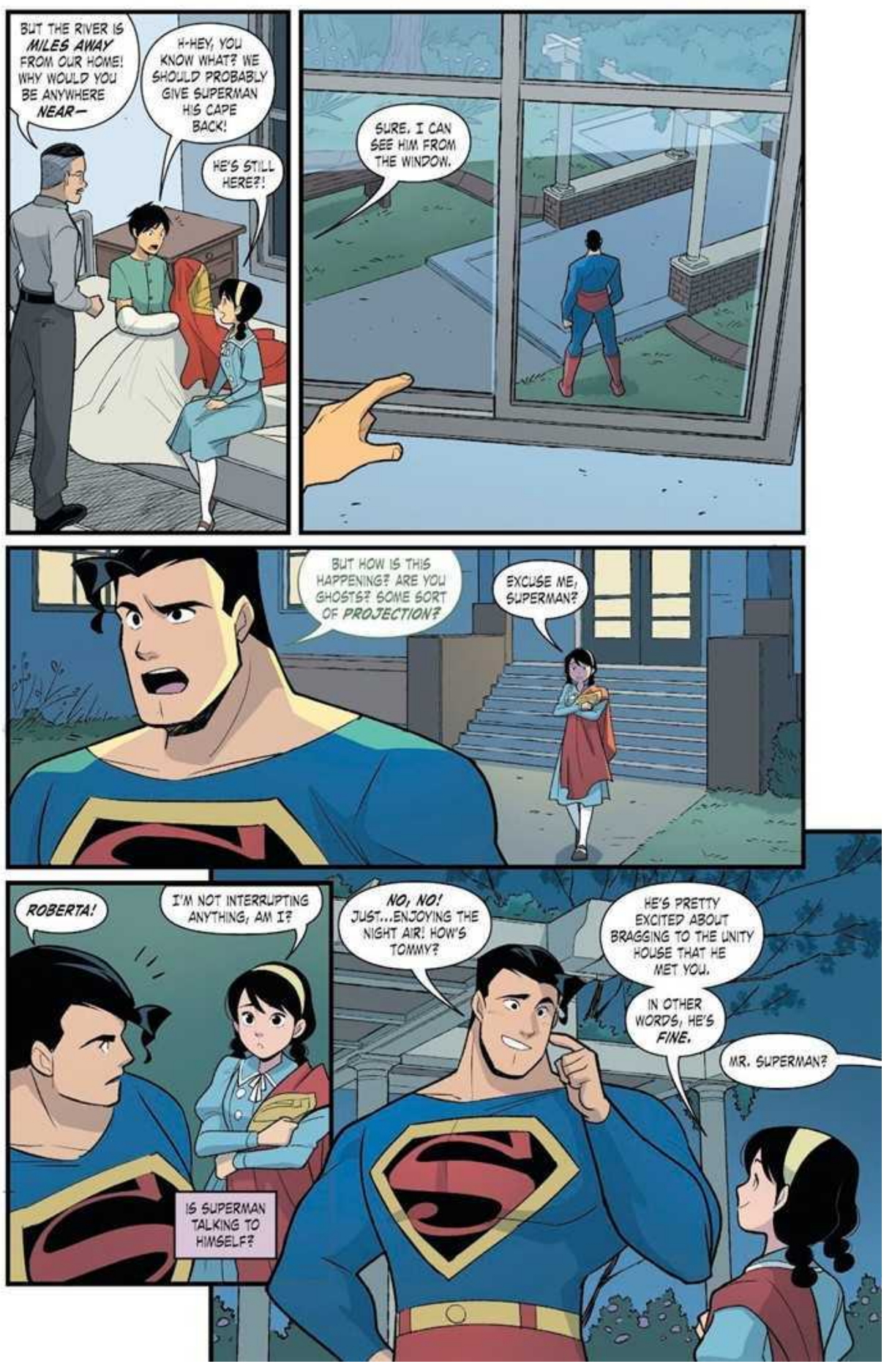

I NEVER SHOULD'VE SHOWN HIM THAT BOX WITH THE VOICES! WHAT IF THAT'S WHAT TRIGGERED ALL THIS STRANGE BEHAVIOR?
BUT THOSE AWFUL PEOPLE PUT IT IN HIS HEAD THAT HE MIGHT BE DEMON POSSESSED!
WE HAVE TO SHOW HIM THAT HE'S NOT! THAT HE'S—
WHAT, MARTHA? SAY IT.
AN ALIEN?
I WOULD NEVER USE THAT WORD FOR OUR CLARK!
THERE ARE FOLKS OUT THERE MUCH MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE BRAVERMANS. IF THEY WERE TO DISCOVER THAT OUR SON IS AN—
THAT HE'S EXTRAORDINARY, THEY MIGHT TAKE HIM AWAY. OR WORSE.
I REFUSE TO LET THAT HAPPEN.
FROM NOW ON, CLARK MUST BE ORDINARY. NO MORE INCIDENTS. NO MORE UNWANTED ATTENTION.
WE'LL RAISE HIM TO BE THE MOST PERFECTLY ORDINARY BOY IN ALL OF SMALLVILLE.
AGREED?
...
AGREED.

Click.
GASP!
NO NO NO!
SHUT UP SHUT UP SHUT UP!
CLARK...?
IS THAT YOU?
VOOOSH!
VOOOSH!
NO NO NO!
SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

SHUT UP!
KRKL
SPLASH
HUFF
HUFF
PLEASE...
HUFF
LET ME BE ORDINARY.
PERFECTLY ORDINARY.
PERFECT.


THE NEXT MORNING, WE SAT DOWN FOR BREAKFAST, JUST LIKE ALWAYS.
WE SMILED AND ATE AND TALKED ABOUT THE DAY AHEAD.
NO ONE BROUGHT UP THE NIGHT BEFORE.
WHY, SON? WHY SOME POWERS, BUT NOT OTHERS?
IT'S AS IF YOU ONLY WANT TO BE HALF OF WHO YOU ACTUALLY ARE.
HOW ABOUT YOU SIGN IT, "TO MY DEAREST TOMMY, THE SMARTEST PERSON IN THE LEE FAMILY!"
NOPE.
TOMMY! ROBERTA, YOU'RE HERE, TOO! OH, THANK GOODNESS!
AFTER THE LAST NIGHT, YOUR FATHER AND I FEARED THE WORST!
WHERE WERE YOU CHILDREN?! HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED?!
DOES IT HURT?
EH. A LITTLE, BUT TOTALLY WORTH IT! YOU SEE, SUPERMAN—
SUPERMAN DID THIS?!
I KNEW HIS "GOOD CITIZEN" ACT WOULDN'T LAST! A BEING THAT POWERFUL COULD NEVER—

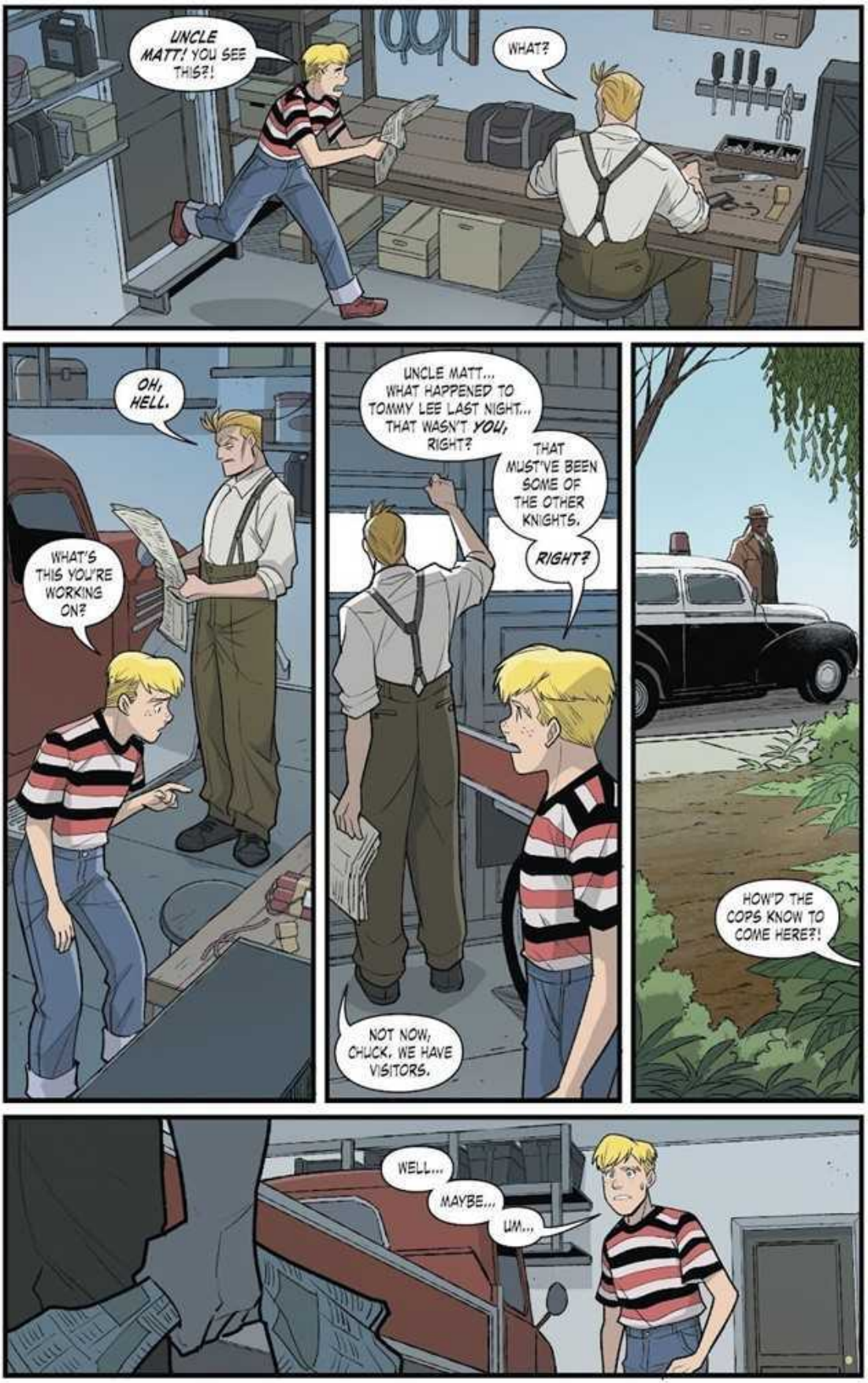
DAD, YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG! SUPERMAN DIDN'T HURT TOMMY—HE SAVED HIS LIFE!
WITH ROBERTA'S HELP.
THANKS, SIS.
...
YOU WOULD'VE DONE THE SAME FOR ME.
YEAH. I WOULD'VE.
BUT THEN WHO HURT YOU, SON?! WAS IT THOSE TERRIBLE MEN IN HOODS?
UH, WELL...
NAH! I WAS, UH, GOOFING AROUND BY THE RIVER AND SORT OF FELL IN! LIKE A DUMMY! HA HA!
?!
WHY WOULD HE LIE ABOUT THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS?!
UM...YUP! HE JUST FELL IN LIKE A DUMMY! HA HA! LIKE THE BIGGEST DUMMY EVER!
WELL, I WOULDN'T SAY THE BIGGEST EVER! HA HA! ACTUALLY, GIVEN THE LIGHTING, IT WAS ALL PRETTY UNDERSTANDABLE!
STILL, GOOD THING SUPERMAN HAPPENED BY!


BUT THE RIVER IS MILES AWAY FROM OUR HOME! WHY WOULD YOU BE ANYWHERE NEAR—
H-HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT? WE SHOULD PROBABLY GIVE SUPERMAN HIS CAPE BACK!
HE'S STILL HERE?!
SURE. I CAN SEE HIM FROM THE WINDOW.
BUT HOW IS THIS HAPPENING? ARE YOU GHOSTS? SOME SORT OF PROJECTION?
EXCUSE ME, SUPERMAN?
ROBERTA!
I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING, AM I?
IS SUPERMAN TALKING TO HIMSELF?
NO, NO! JUST...ENJOYING THE NIGHT AIR! HOW'S TOMMY?
HE'S PRETTY EXCITED ABOUT BRAGGING TO THE UNITY HOUSE THAT HE MET YOU.
IN OTHER WORDS, HE'S FINE.
MR. SUPERMAN?

THANK YOU, MR. SUPERMAN! OUR SON IS ALIVE AND SAFE! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
MRS. AND DR. LEE, I PRESUME?
YOUR CHILDREN ARE SO COURAGEOUS! YOU MUST BE PROUD!
MY WIFE AND I TRULY ARE GRATEFUL TO YOU, SUPERMAN.
HERE'S YOUR CAPE BACK.
...
CAN I LET YOU IN ON A SECRET, ROBERTA? CRIME-FIGHTING CAN BE PRETTY ROUGH ON CAPES, SO MY MOTHER MADE ME A WHOLE CLOSETFUL OF THESE.
I'D LIKE YOU TO KEEP THIS ONE.
WHAT?! REALLY?!
IS TOMMY RIGHT?
IS EVERYTHING WE'VE GONE THROUGH IN METROPOLIS WORTH IT FOR THIS ONE MOMENT?
AFTER ALL, YOU'RE THE REAL HERO TONIGHT!
I THINK I'M GONNA HAVE TO SAY YES.

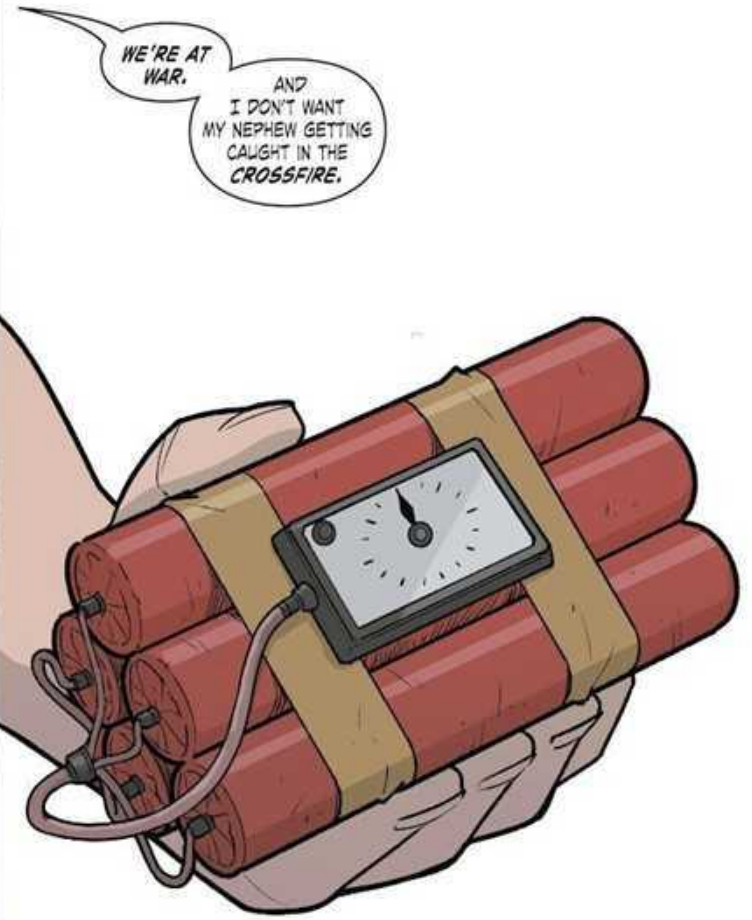
THE NEXT MORNING. THE DAILY PLANET.
PERRY?
YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
IT'S YOUR STORY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT, KENT.
YOU NEED A REWRITE? I'D BE HAPPY TO—
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M GETTING AT. IT'S TREMENDOUS.
SO GOOD, IN FACT, I THOUGHT LOIS HAD WRITTEN IT.
UM... THANKS?
IT'S JUST... THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS KIDNAPPED A KID?
HERE IN METROPOLIS?!
GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST, IS THIS REALLY MY CITY?!
BUT THEY DIDN'T GET AWAY WITH IT, RIGHT? SUPERMAN—
THAT'S JUST IT. SUPERMAN DID SOMETHING.
AND SO SHOULD WE.

MY, MY.
Daily Planet
DAILY PLANET
$1000 REWARD FOR KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS
After second Klan attack, Daily Planet offers reward for information leading to arrest of Klan leader!
WITH A THOUSAND DOLLARS WE COULD GET OUT OF YOUR UNCLE'S HAIR AND RENT OUR OWN PLACE, CHUCK!
TELL ME, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS?
M-M-MOM?! W-W-WHY WOULD YOU—?!
HA HA! I'M JUST JOSHING YOU, SWEETIE!
BUT THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE SURE WAS!
TH-THAT'S NOT FUNNY, MOM!
DON'T GET ME WRONG. THOSE KLANSMEN ARE THE WORST SORT OF CRIMINALS! I HOPE THE POLICE OR SUPERMAN THROW 'EM BEHIND BARS FOREVER!
BUT IS IT REALLY ALL THAT BAD TO WANT TO LIVE AMONG ONLY YOUR OWN KIND?
I GOTTA RUN OR I'LL MISS THE BUS, SWEETIE!
YOUR UNCLE'S BEEN HOLED UP IN THE GARAGE ALL NIGHT!
TELL HIM TO TAKE A BREAK! HE PROBABLY DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IT'S DAYTIME YET!

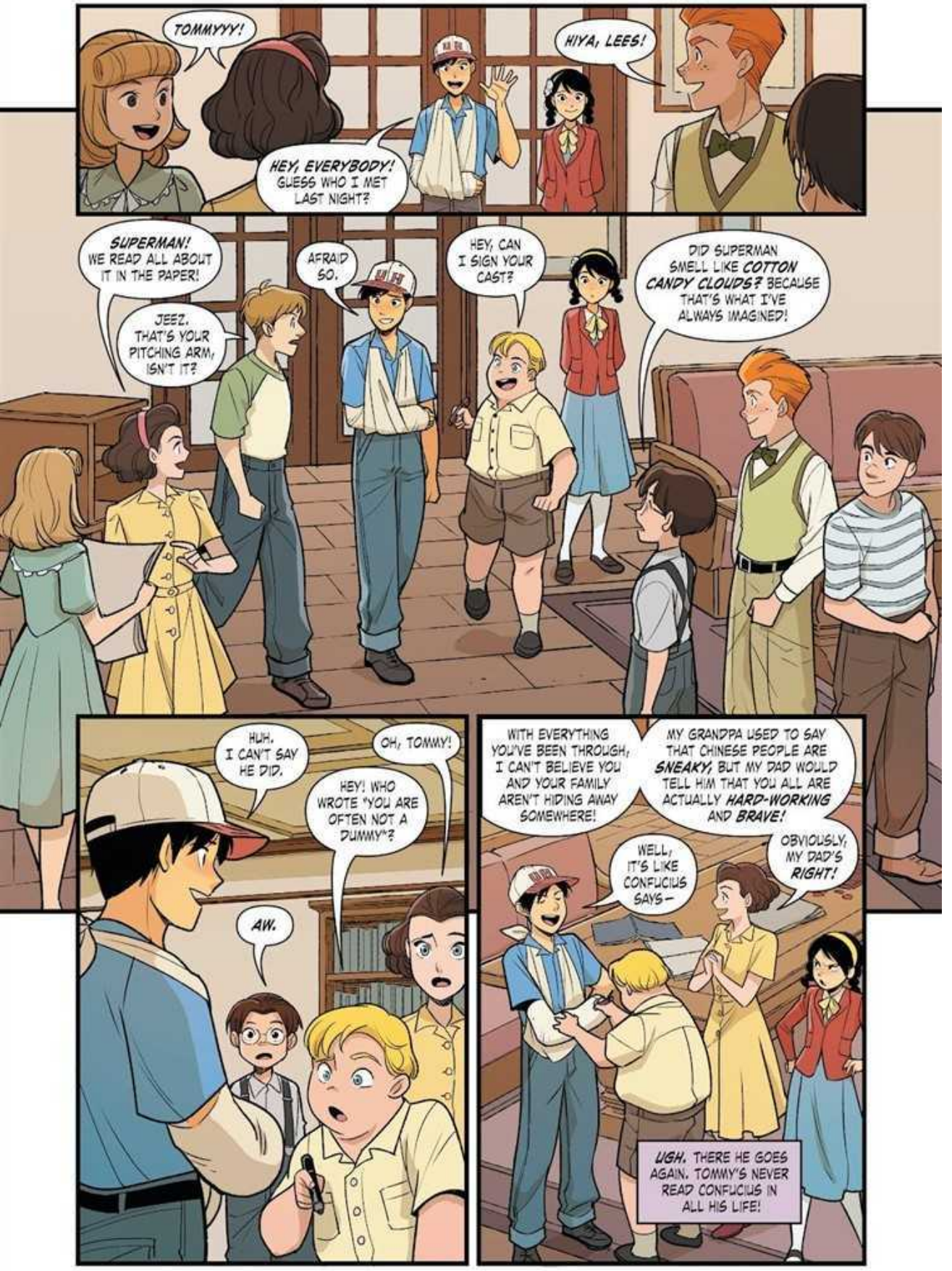

UNCLE MATT! YOU SEE THIS?!
WHAT?
OH, HELL.
WHAT'S THIS YOU'RE WORKING ON?
UNCLE MATT... WHAT HAPPENED TO TOMMY LEE LAST NIGHT... THAT WASN'T YOU, RIGHT?
THAT MUST'VE BEEN SOME OF THE OTHER KNIGHTS.
RIGHT?
NOT NOW, CHUCK. WE HAVE VISITORS.
HOW'D THE COPS KNOW TO COME HERE?!
WELL...
MAYBE...
UM...

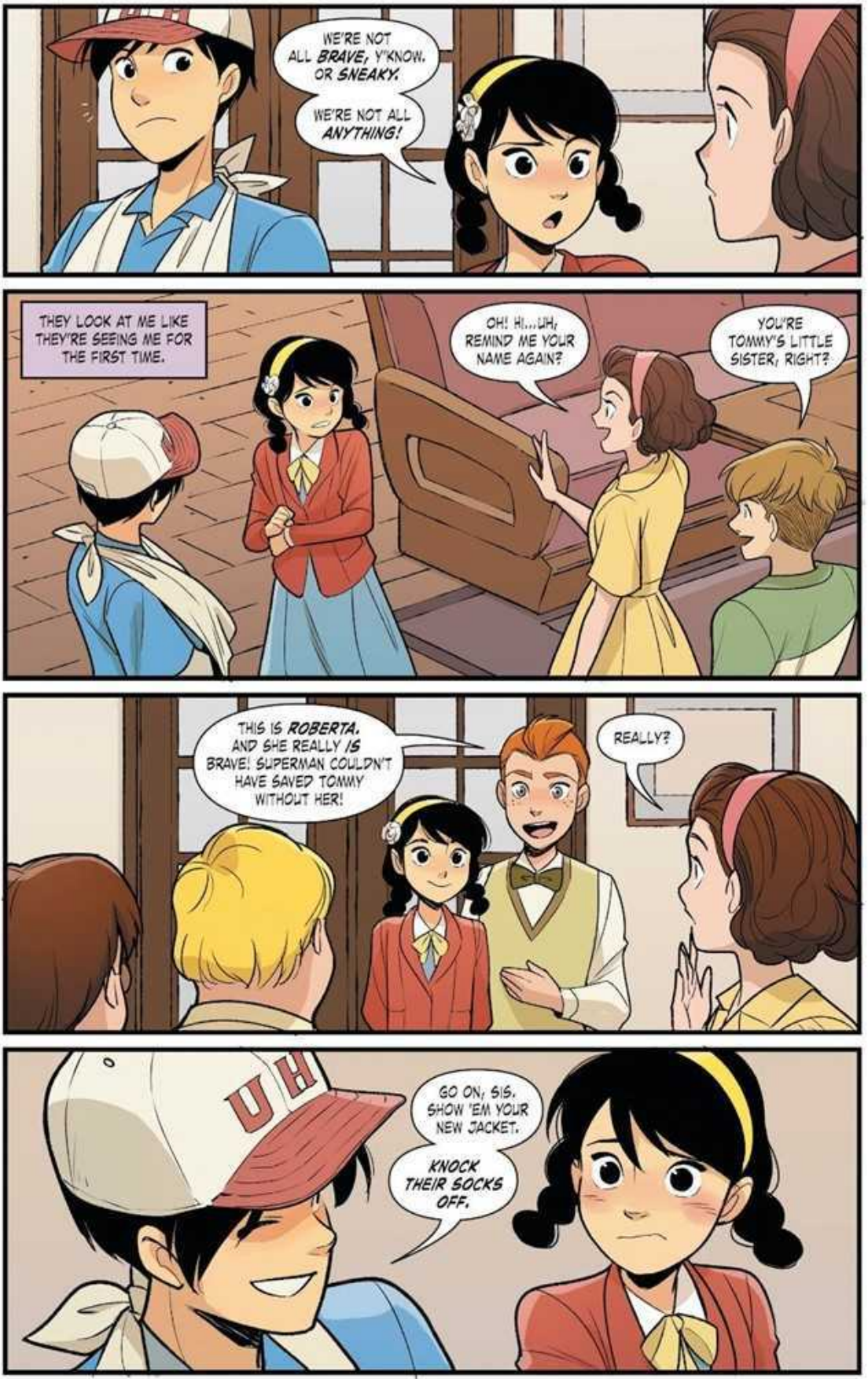
SOMEONE MUST'VE GIVEN ME UP FOR THAT BLASTED DAILY PLANET REWARD MONEY!
YEAH... YEAH! THAT'S IT!
UNCLE MATT, YOU GOTTA GO! GET OUTTA TOWN! SNEAK OUT THE BACK, I'LL COVER FOR YOU!
HA! THERE'S MY GOOD AND LOYAL KNIGHT!

A WORD OF ADVICE, CHUCK: STAY AWAY FROM THE UNITY HOUSE.
AFTER ALL...

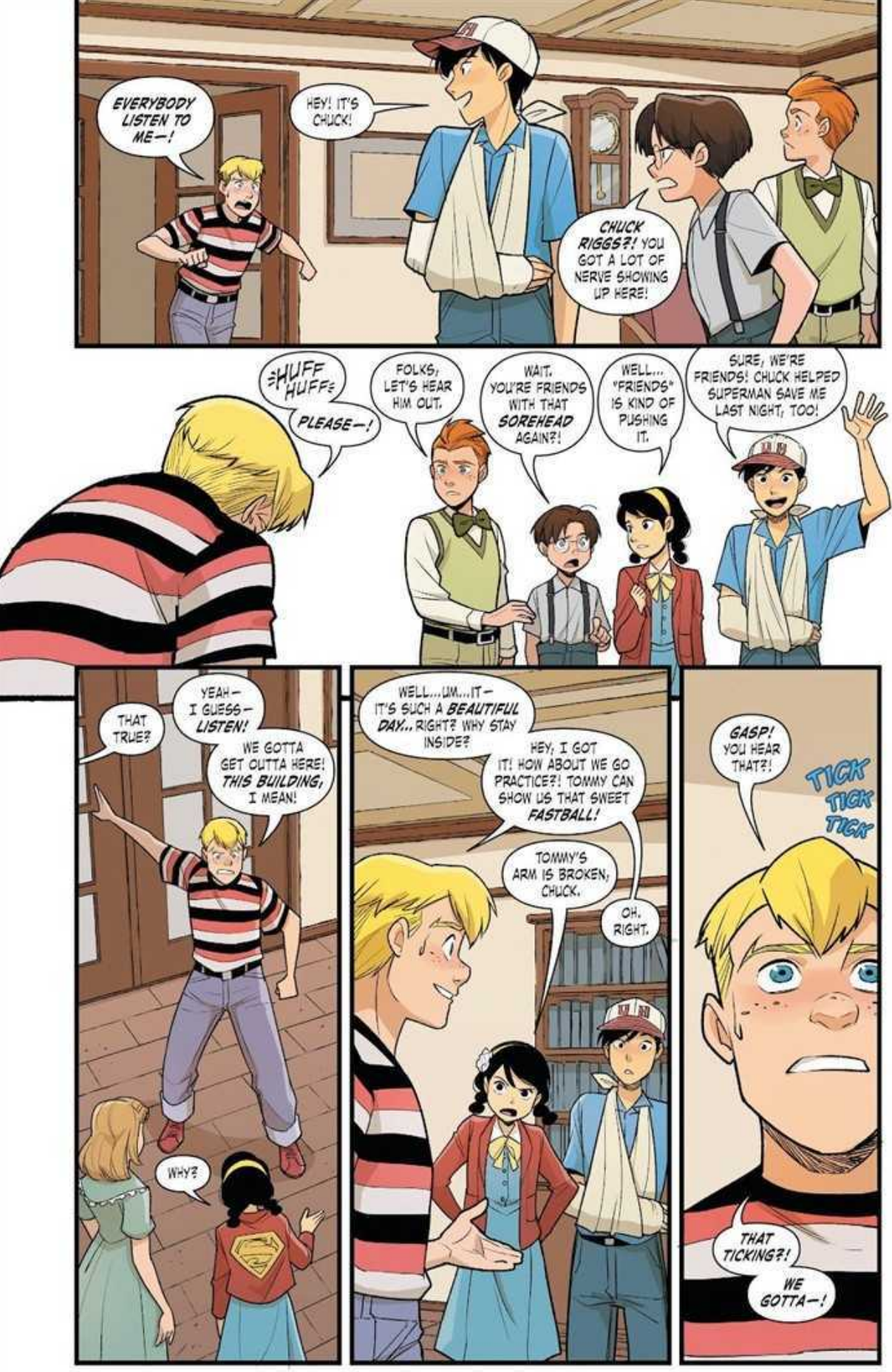

WE'RE AT WAR.
AND I DON'T WANT MY NEPHEW GETTING CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE.

YOU HEAR?
STAY AWAY.

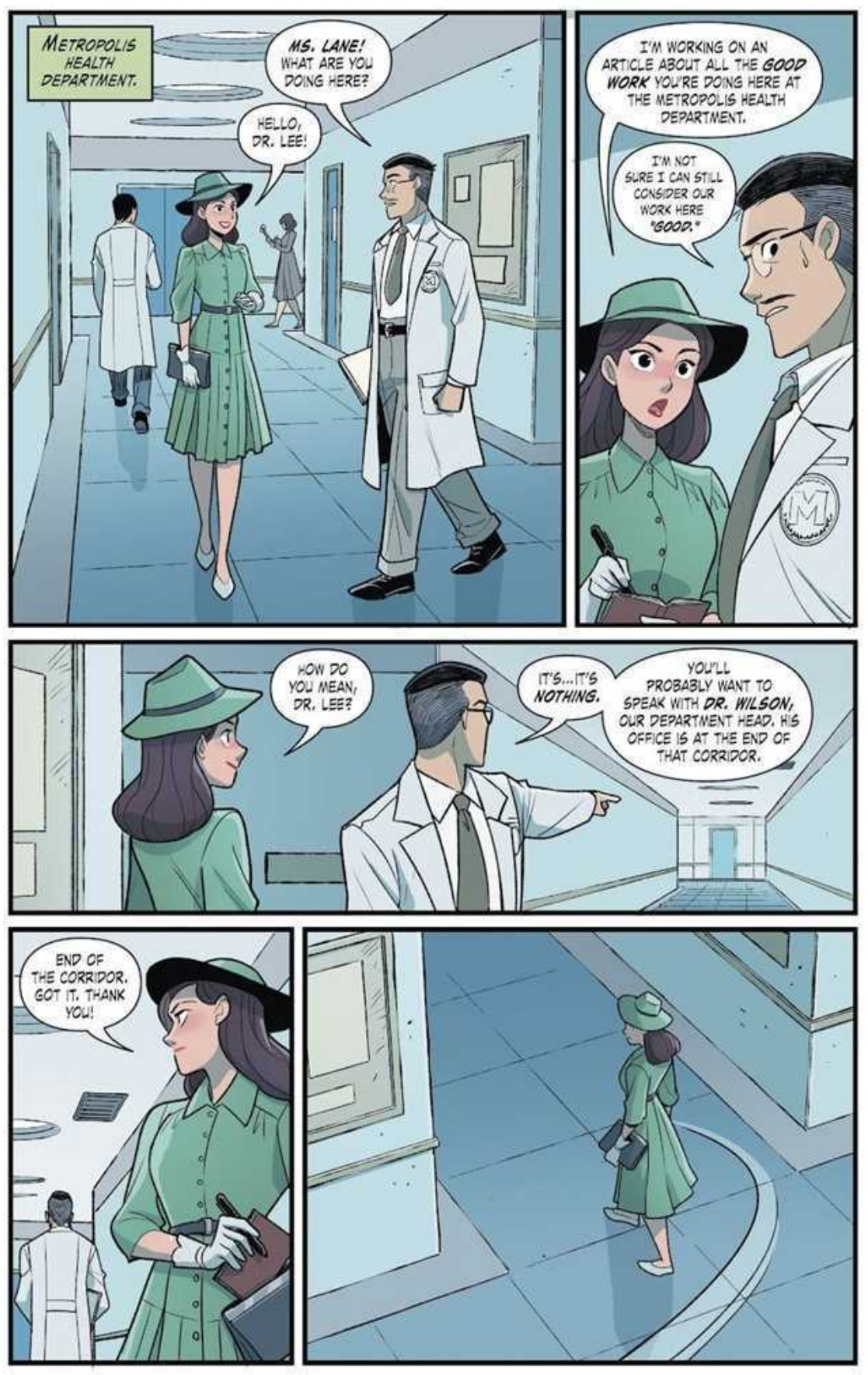

TOMMYYY!
HEY, EVERYBODY! GUESS WHO I MET LAST NIGHT?
HIYA, LEES!
SUPERMAN! WE READ ALL ABOUT IT IN THE PAPER!
JEEZ. THAT'S YOUR PITCHING ARM, ISN'T IT?
AFRAID SO.
HEY, CAN I SIGN YOUR CAST?
DID SUPERMAN SMELL LIKE COTTON CANDY CLOUDS? BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS IMAGINED!
HUH. I CAN'T SAY HE DID.
OH, TOMMY!
HEY! WHO WROTE "YOU ARE OFTEN NOT A DUMMY"?
AW.
WITH EVERYTHING YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AREN'T HIDING AWAY SOMEWHERE!
MY GRANDPA USED TO SAY THAT CHINESE PEOPLE ARE SNEAKY, BUT MY DAD WOULD TELL HIM THAT YOU ALL ARE ACTUALLY HARD-WORKING AND BRAVE!
WELL, IT'S LIKE CONFUCIUS SAYS—
OBVIOUSLY, MY DAD'S RIGHT!
UGH. THERE HE GOES AGAIN. TOMMY'S NEVER READ CONFUCIUS IN ALL HIS LIFE!

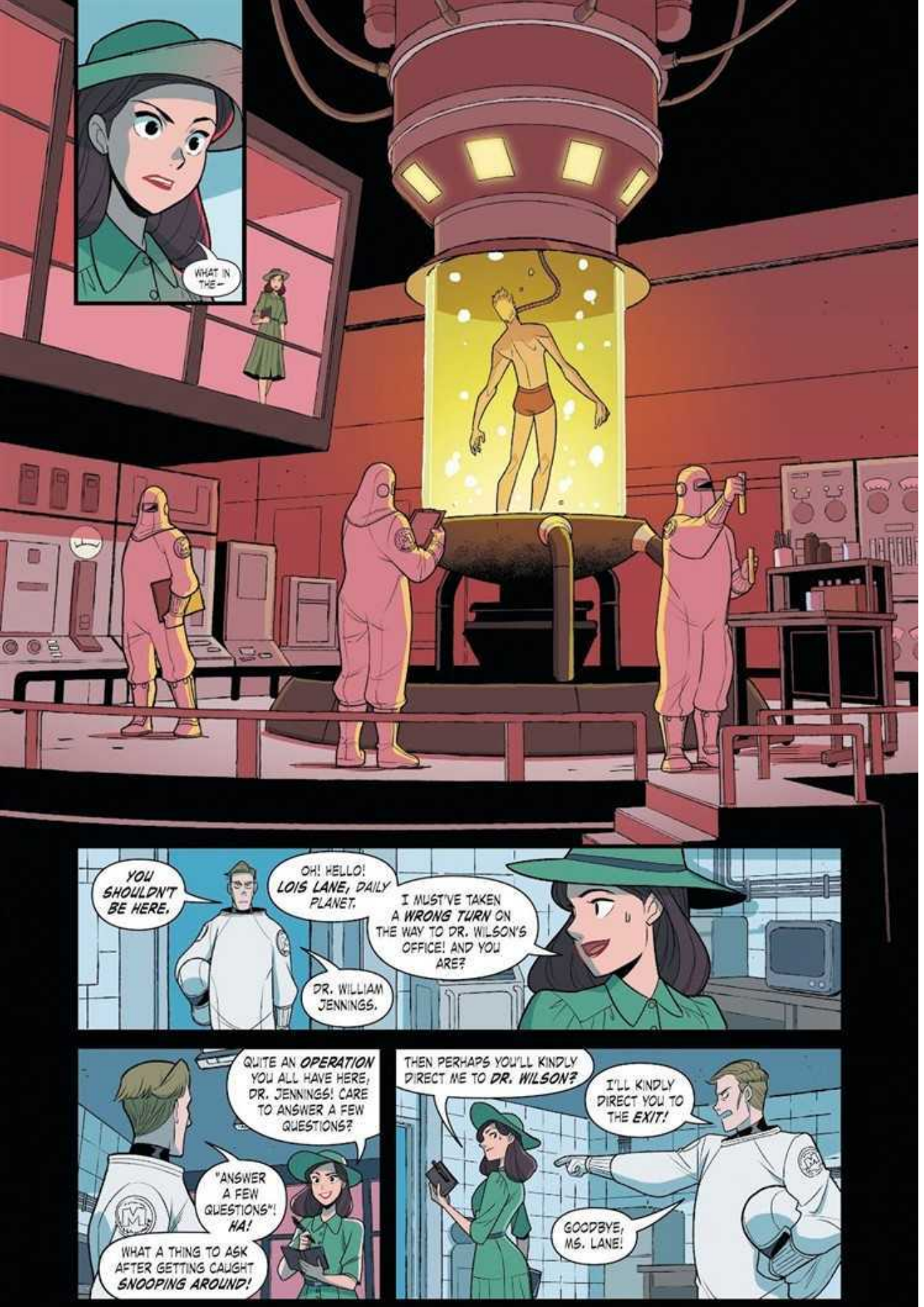

WE'RE NOT ALL BRAVE, Y'KNOW. OR SNEAKY.
WE'RE NOT ALL ANYTHING!
THEY LOOK AT ME LIKE THEY'RE SEEING ME FOR THE FIRST TIME.
OH! HI...UH, REMIND ME YOUR NAME AGAIN?
YOU'RE TOMMY'S LITTLE SISTER, RIGHT?
THIS IS ROBERTA. AND SHE REALLY IS BRAVE! SUPERMAN COULDN'T HAVE SAVED TOMMY WITHOUT HER!
REALLY?
UH
GO ON, SIS. SHOW 'EM YOUR NEW JACKET.
KNOCK THEIR SOCKS OFF.

SUPERMAN GAVE ME HIS CAPE. OUR MOM MADE IT INTO THIS JACKET.
YOUR MOM SEWED THAT?!
IT'S BEAUTIFUL!
MIND IF I CHECK IF IT SMELLS LIKE COTTON CANDY CLOUDS?
DON'T BE WEIRD!
NO WAY!
MY SOCKS ARE OFFICIALLY KNOCKED OFF!
I THINK I'VE FIGURED OUT WHY TOMMY DIDN'T TELL OUR PARENTS ABOUT THE KLAN. DESPITE EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, HE DOESN'T WANT TO LEAVE.
AND I GET IT. HERE IN METROPOLIS, OUR LIVES SOMEHOW FEEL BIGGER.
IT LOOKS GREAT ON YOU, ROBERTA. BETTER THAN ON SUPERMAN, EVEN.
BUT DON'T TELL HIM I SAID THAT.
THANKS, JIMMY.
AND I WON'T.
FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE WE MOVED, I DON'T FEEL LIKE SUCH A WEIRDO.

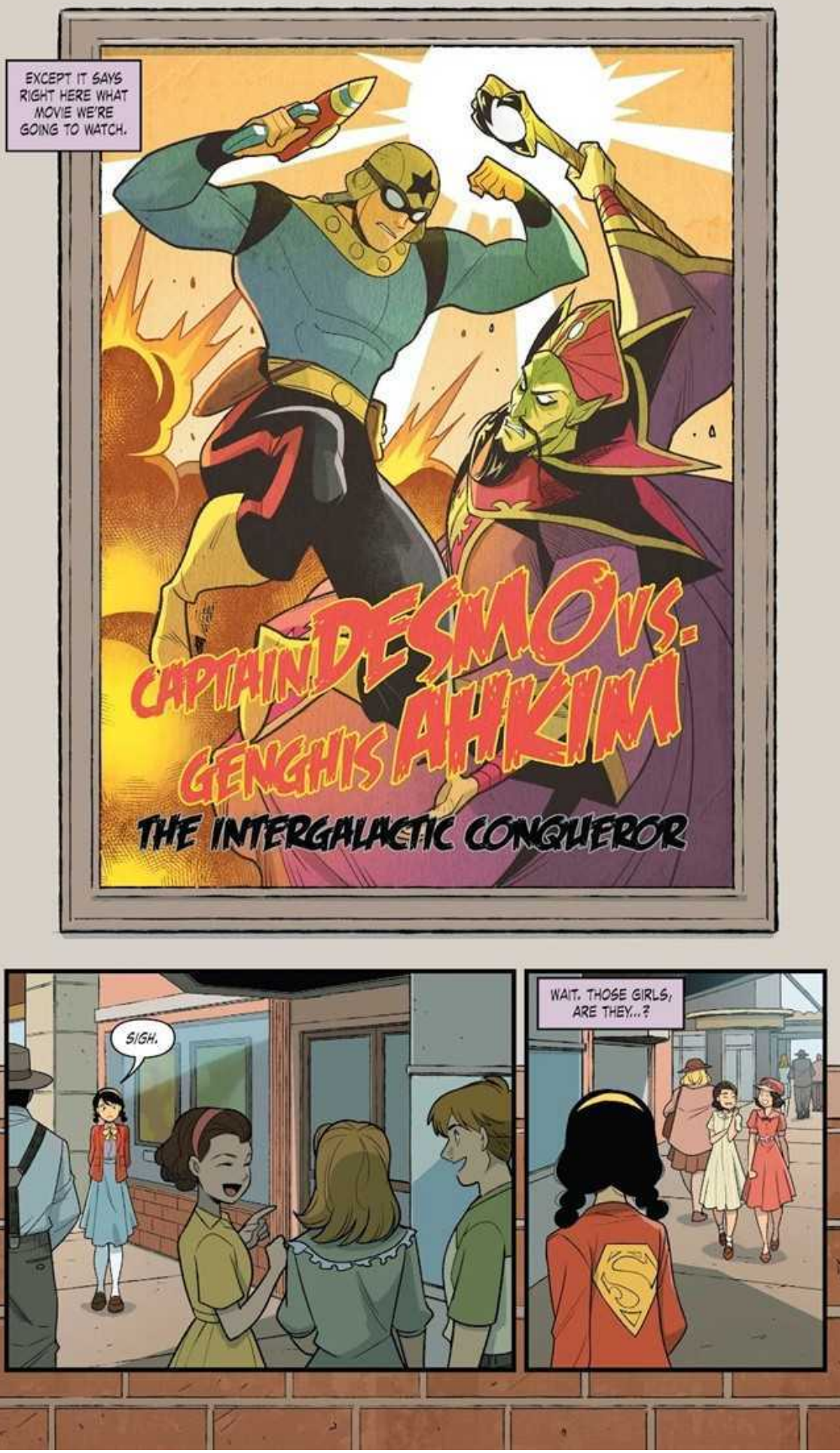

EVERYBODY LISTEN TO ME—!
HEY! IT'S CHUCK!
CHUCK RIGGS?! YOU GOT A LOT OF NERVE SHOWING UP HERE!
#HUFF HUFF#
PLEASE—!
FOLKS, LET'S HEAR HIM OUT.
WAIT. YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH THAT SOREHEAD AGAIN?!
WELL... "FRIENDS" IS KIND OF PUSHING IT.
SURE, WE'RE FRIENDS! CHUCK HELPED SUPERMAN SAVE ME LAST NIGHT, TOO!
THAT TRUE?
YEAH— I GUESS— LISTEN!
WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE! THIS BUILDING, I MEAN!
WHY?
WELL...UM...IT— IT'S SUCH A BEAUTIFUL DAY... RIGHT? WHY STAY INSIDE?
HEY, I GOT IT! HOW ABOUT WE GO PRACTICE?! TOMMY CAN SHOW US THAT SWEET FASTBALL!
TOMMY'S ARM IS BROKEN, CHUCK.
OH. RIGHT.
GASP! YOU HEAR THAT?!
TICK TICK TICK
THAT TICKING?!
WE GOTTA—!

YOU MEAN THE TICKING OF THAT CLOCK?
OH, YEAH. OF COURSE. THE CLOCK. HEH HEH.
TICK TICK TICK
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, CHUCK?
HOW ABOUT THIS? MAYBE WE SHOULD, I DON'T KNOW, HEAD OVER TO THE THEATER FOR A MOVIE OR SOMETHING?
HEY, THAT'S A GREAT IDEA!
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO SEE THAT NEW CAPTAIN DESMO FLICK.
SOMETHING'S OFF ABOUT CHUCK. I NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT.
I HEARD THE SPECIAL EFFECTS ARE A BLAST!


METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT.
MS. LANE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
HELLO, DR. LEE!
I'M WORKING ON AN ARTICLE ABOUT ALL THE GOOD WORK YOU'RE DOING HERE AT THE METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT.
I'M NOT SURE I CAN STILL CONSIDER OUR WORK HERE "GOOD."
HOW DO YOU MEAN, DR. LEE?
IT'S... IT'S NOTHING.
YOU'LL PROBABLY WANT TO SPEAK WITH DR. WILSON, OUR DEPARTMENT HEAD. HIS OFFICE IS AT THE END OF THAT CORRIDOR.
END OF THE CORRIDOR. GOT IT. THANK YOU!

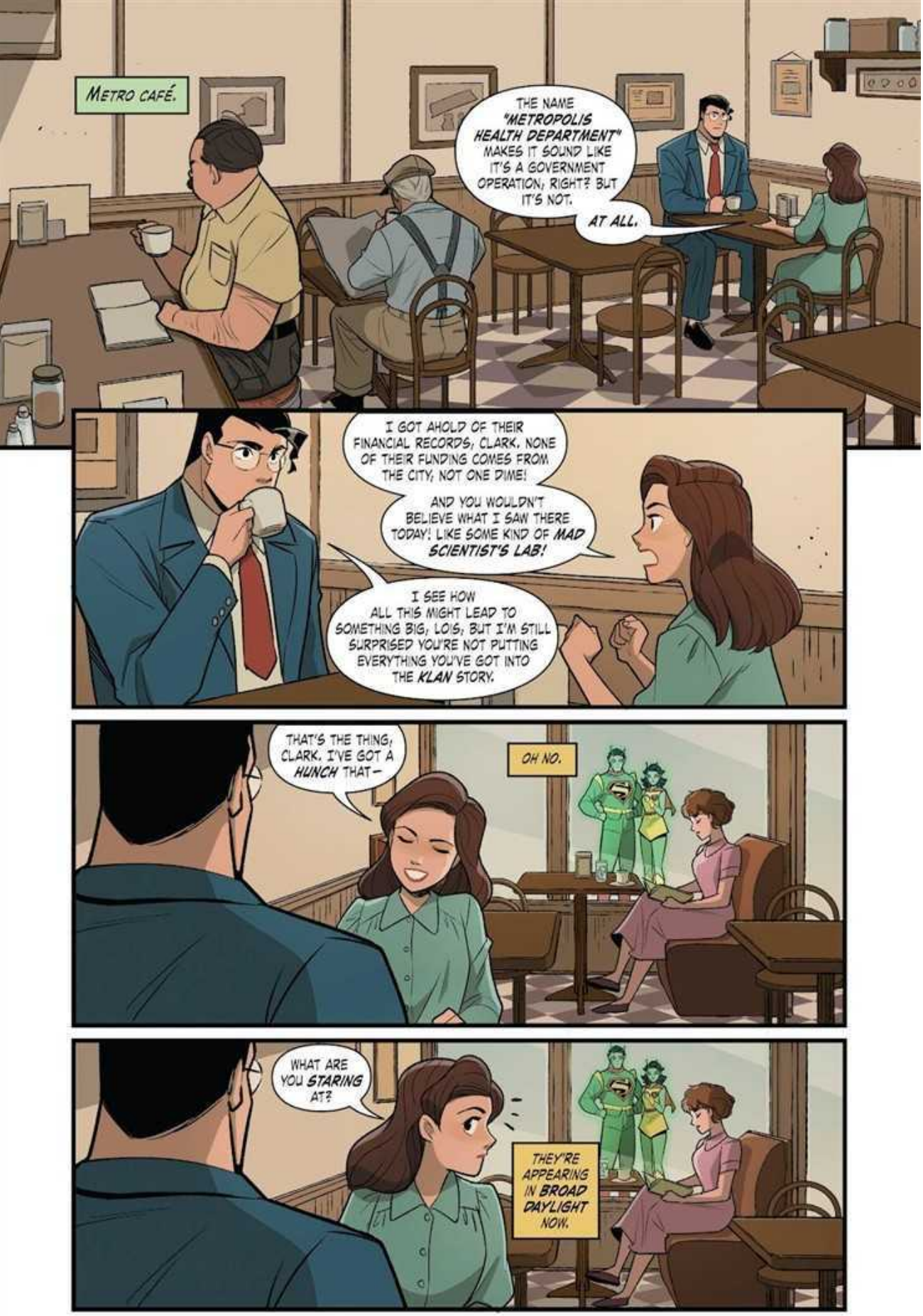

WHAT IN THE—
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
OH! HELLO! LOIS LANE, DAILY PLANET.
I MUST'VE TAKEN A WRONG TURN ON THE WAY TO DR. WILSON'S OFFICE! AND YOU ARE?
DR. WILLIAM JENNINGS.
QUITE AN OPERATION YOU ALL HAVE HERE, DR. JENNINGS! CARE TO ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS?
"ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS"! HA!
WHAT A THING TO ASK AFTER GETTING CAUGHT SNOOPING AROUND!
THEN PERHAPS YOU'LL KINDLY DIRECT ME TO DR. WILSON?
I'LL KINDLY DIRECT YOU TO THE EXIT!
GOODBYE, MS. LANE!

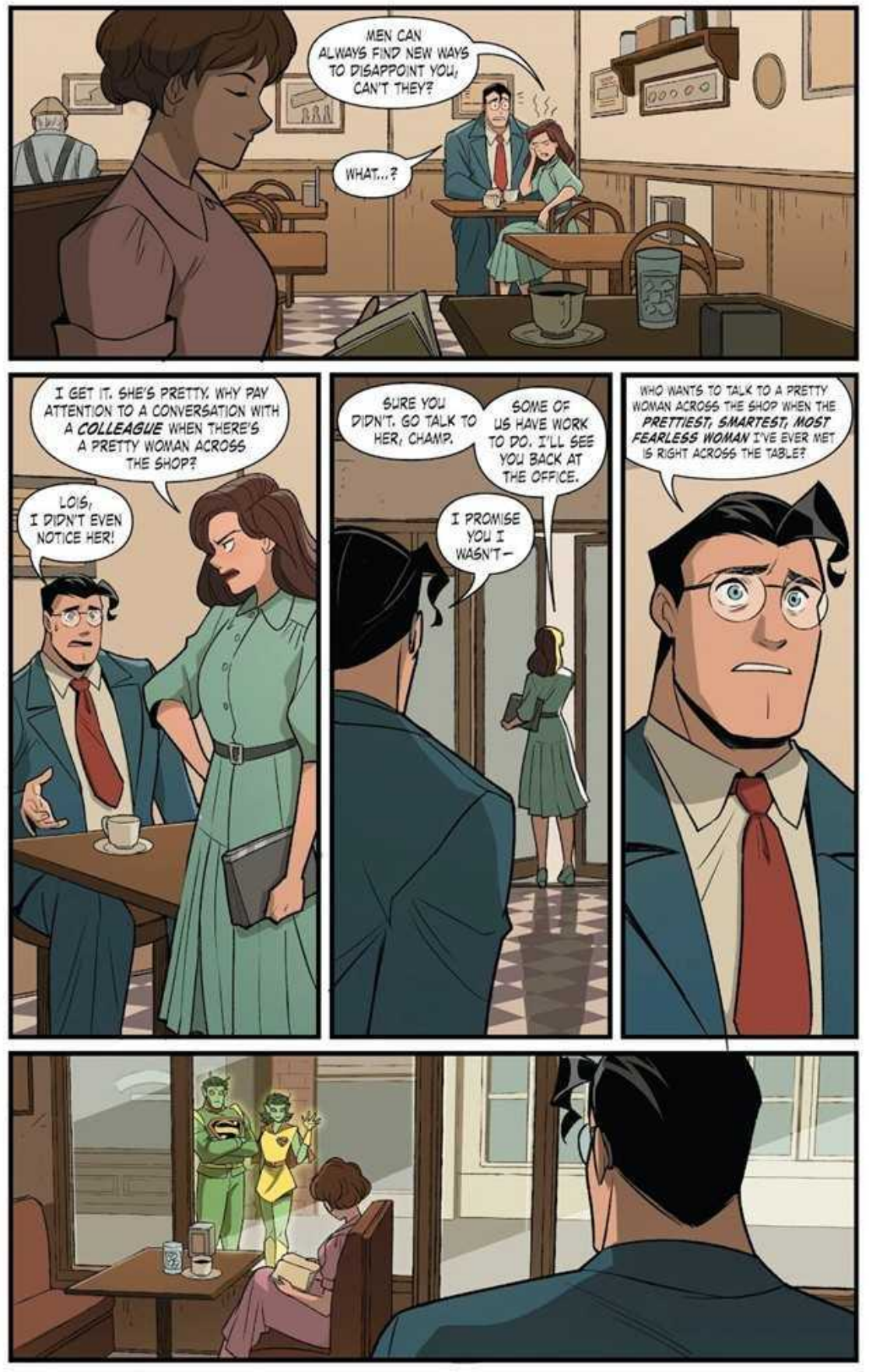
ROBERTA, YOU GOTTA TELL ME! WHAT'S SUPERMAN *REALLY* LIKE?
DID YOU GET A WHIFF OF COTTON CANDY CLOUDS AT ALL?
YOU GOTTA STOP WITH THAT.
HE'S WARM AND KIND, BUT *STRONG* AS ALL GET-OUT! YOU KNOW THE METROPOLIS RIVER? HE LEAPT ACROSS IT IN A *SINGLE BOUND!*
AND YOU ACTUALLY HELPED HIM SAVE YOUR BROTHER?
LIKE I WAS SAYING, YOU CHINESE ARE *SO BRAVE!*
NO, NOT REALLY. TO BE HONEST... I WAS *COMPLETELY SCARED* THE WHOLE TIME! RIGHT BEFORE WE FOUND TOMMY, I *THREW UP* INTO A BUSH! RIGHT IN FRONT OF SUPERMAN!
WHICH WAS BETTER THAN THE TIME BEFORE, I GUESS, WHEN I THREW UP ALL OVER MY JACKET AND HANDS!
WHAT I'M SAYING IS, I THROW UP A LOT.
LIKE, *A LOT* A LOT. IN A *NOT-SO-BRAVE* WAY.
Y'KNOW. *GURGLY STOMACH.*
...
...
SOOO...I'M GONNA GO FIND OUT WHAT MOVIE WE'RE WATCHING.
OH. OKAY.


EXCEPT IT SAYS RIGHT HERE WHAT MOVIE WE'RE GOING TO WATCH.
CAPTAIN DESMO VS. GENGHIS AHKIM
THE INTERGALACTIC CONQUEROR
SIGH.
WAIT. THOSE GIRLS, ARE THEY...?

THEY ARE!
I'M SO HAPPY TO SEE YOU!
ROBERTA!
IT'S YOU.
HARRIET! VIVIAN!
MY OLD FRIENDS FROM CHINATOWN!
COME ON, HARRIET. WE DON'T WANT TO MISS THE OPENING CREDITS.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?
IT ALWAYS SEEMED LIKE SHE DIDN'T LIKE ME.
YOU KNOW HOW VIV IS.
WELL... SHE THOUGHT YOU WERE KIND OF STANDOFFISH. EVERY TIME WE ASKED YOU TO COME TO THE MOVIES WITH US, YOU'D TURN US DOWN.
ONLY BECAUSE THE BUS RIDE WOULD MAKE ME FEEL SICK!
...

YOU SURE IT WASN'T BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE BETTER THAN THE REST OF US?
WHAT?!
YOUR FATHER THE DOCTOR CERTAINLY ACTED THAT WAY.
THAT ISN'T HOW—
THAT'S WHY YOUR FAMILY LEFT CHINATOWN, ISN'T IT?
NO! IT'S—
LOOK, IT'S BEEN SO LONG.
MAYBE WE CAN SIT TOGETHER IN THE THEATER? I REALLY MISS—
YOU'RE HERE WITH YOUR NEW FRIENDS, RIGHT? I'M SURE YOU'D HAVE MORE FUN SITTING WITH THEM.
NICE BUMPING INTO YOU, ROBERTA.
YEAH...
YOU, TOO.

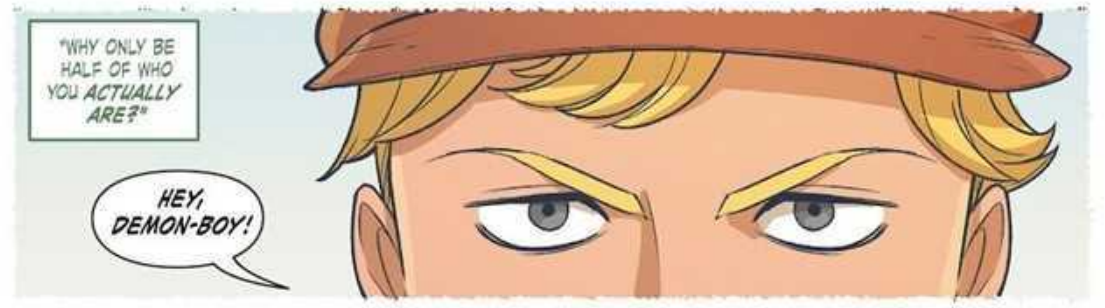

METRO CAFÉ.
THE NAME "METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT" MAKES IT SOUND LIKE IT'S A GOVERNMENT OPERATION, RIGHT? BUT IT'S NOT.
AT ALL.
I GOT AHOLD OF THEIR FINANCIAL RECORDS, CLARK. NONE OF THEIR FUNDING COMES FROM THE CITY, NOT ONE DIME!
AND YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT I SAW THERE TODAY! LIKE SOME KIND OF MAD SCIENTIST'S LAB!
I SEE HOW ALL THIS MIGHT LEAD TO SOMETHING BIG, LOIS, BUT I'M STILL SURPRISED YOU'RE NOT PUTTING EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT INTO THE KLAN STORY.
THAT'S THE THING, CLARK. I'VE GOT A HUNCH THAT—
OH NO.
WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?
THEY'RE APPEARING IN BROAD DAYLIGHT NOW.


MEN CAN ALWAYS FIND NEW WAYS TO DISAPPOINT YOU, CAN'T THEY?
WHAT...?
I GET IT. SHE'S PRETTY. WHY PAY ATTENTION TO A CONVERSATION WITH A COLLEAGUE WHEN THERE'S A PRETTY WOMAN ACROSS THE SHOP?
LOIS, I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE HER!
SURE YOU DIDN'T. GO TALK TO HER, CHAMP.
SOME OF US HAVE WORK TO DO. I'LL SEE YOU BACK AT THE OFFICE.
I PROMISE YOU I WASN'T—
WHO WANTS TO TALK TO A PRETTY WOMAN ACROSS THE SHOP WHEN THE PRETTIEST, SMARTEST, MOST FEARLESS WOMAN I'VE EVER MET IS RIGHT ACROSS THE TABLE?

SON? SON!
WAIT UP!
HEY! WATCH IT, FELLA!
COME ON.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO SHOW YOURSELVES, SHOW YOURSELVES NOW.

THE CITY'S SKYLINE IS SPECTACULAR.
PRIMITIVE, BUT SPECTACULAR.
IS THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT US UP HERE, SON? TO SHOW US THE VIEW?
WE'RE UP HERE BECAUSE I CAN'T BE SEEN TALKING TO MYSELF.
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?

WE'D LIKE YOU TO ANSWER OUR QUESTION...


"WHY ONLY BE HALF OF WHO YOU ACTUALLY ARE?"
HEY, DEMON-BOY!

HOW ABOUT YOU LEVA—LEVI—LEVO—
FLOAT FOR US AGAIN, DEMON-BOY?!
YEAH! SHOOT US WITH THEM HELLFIRE EYES!
KYLE, KENNY, GO AWAY!

NOT UNTIL YOU SHOW ALL THESE FINE CHURCH-GOIN' FOLKS YOUR TRUE DEMONIC NATURE!
KYLE AND ME AREN'T NUTS, Y'KNOW! WE SAW WHAT WE SAW!
HEY!

CAN'T YOU CHUMPS TELL HE DOESN'T WANT YOU AROUND?! SCRAM!
THAT RED-HEADED GIRL AND I WOULD SOON BECOME BEST FRIENDS.
CHECK IT OUT, KENNY! THIS MOUTHY GIRL IS STICKIN' UP FOR KENT!
THEY MUST BE LOVEBIRDS!
SMOOCHIE! SMOOCHIE!
AS I WATCHED THE BRAVERMAN BOYS WALK UP TO HER, I FELT MY FACE GO HOT WITH ANGER.
THEN CAME THE VOICES.
ANGER POOLED INTO MY EYES.
MY FEET BEGAN TO LEAVE THE GROUND.

NO...
NOT AGAIN!
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME AGAIN?!
I THREW YOU AWAY!

AS IF THEY UNDERSTOOD—
—THE VOICES LEFT ME.
?!
ALL OF IT LEFT ME.
YEOWCH!
WAP!
NOT TRYING TO BE MEAN, KID, BUT YOU'RE PRETTY TERRIBLE AT STICKING UP FOR YOURSELF.
HA HA. YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.
THANKS FOR HANDLING THOSE JERKS.
I WAS FINALLY AN ORDINARY BOY.
MY DAD AND I JUST MOVED INTO TOWN.
CAME TO SERVICE HOPING TO MEET SOME FOLKS. MY NAME'S LANA LANG.
WELCOME TO SMALLVILLE, LANA. I'M CLARK KENT.
PERFECTLY ORDINARY.

PERFECT.
LOOK AT THIS. I LOVE BEING A PART OF THIS.
A PART OF THEM.
SON...
PLEASE DON'T CALL ME THAT.
I'M FROM A TOWN CALLED SMALLVILLE. I WAS RAISED BY JONATHAN AND MARTHA KENT.
THEY'RE MY PARENTS.
HOWEVER YOU'RE DOING THIS, HOWEVER YOU'RE APPEARING TO ME?
PLEASE.
STOP.
I'VE FINALLY CREATED A LIFE FOR MYSELF WHERE NO ONE LOOKS AT ME IN FEAR.
NO ONE WHO ISN'T COMMITTING A CRIME, ANYWAY.
PLEASE DON'T RUIN THAT FOR ME.
BUT DON'T YOU WANT THE TRUTH?
I WANT MY LIFE MORE.
GOODBYE.

ALL THIS TIME, I'VE REMEMBERED IT WRONG.
CAPTAIN DESMO, YOU FOOL!
I'VE BEEN A WEIRDO ALL ALONG, EVEN WITH MY OLD JACKET, EVEN IN CHINATOWN.
YOU AND YOUR PITIABLE PLANET DO NOT STAND A CHANCE AGAINST ME!
FOR I AM GENGHIS AHKIM THE INTERGALACTIC CONQUEROR!
YOU UNDERESTIMATE US EARTHLINGS AT YOUR OWN PERIL—
ALWAYS WATCHING FROM THE SIDELINES, ALWAYS LOOKING FOR SOME CLUE THAT MIGHT HELP ME FIT IN.
NEVER FINDING IT.
YOU ALIEN SCUM!

WE SHALL SEE ABOUT THAT, DESMO! MWHAHAHA!
EGADS! HE'S FLYING! RUN!
AIYEEE!
WHOA!
GENGHIS AHKIM CAN FLY?!
HOW'D THEY DO THAT?!
MOVIEMAKERS ARE SO CLEVER. THEY MUST'VE USED SOME SORT OF WIRING, RIGHT?
NO WAY A HUMAN BEING COULD DEFY GRAVITY LIKE THAT...
NO MATTER HOW STRONG OR FAST...
OR SUPER.
JUST LIKE THAT, A THEORY PIECES TOGETHER LIKE A PUZZLE IN MY MIND.
I HAVE TO TALK IT THROUGH WITH SOMEONE.
HEY, QUIT BLOCKING THE SCREEN!
WHERE'S TOMMY?
SORRY!

HOLD IT AS LIGHT AS YOU CAN, LIKE IT'S AN EGG THAT MIGHT CRACK.
GOT IT?
I THINK SO.
THEN LET 'ER RIP!
PAFF!
YEOW! YOU ALMOST BROKE MY OTHER HAND!
KIDDIN', CHUCK! BUT SERIOUSLY, THAT WAS WAAAY FASTER THAN BEFORE!
AW, JEEZ! I DIDN'T MEAN TO—
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING OUT HERE?

EH. DIDN'T FEEL LIKE BEING STUCK IN A THEATER.
BUT THIS WAS YOUR IDEA!
SIS, HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO CONCENTRATE ON A DUMB SPACE MOVIE WHEN WE'VE GOT A CHAMPIONSHIP GAME COMING UP?
YOUR CAST IS GONNA MAKE IT HARD FOR YOU TO PITCH, TOMMY!
WHICH IS WHY I GOTTA TEACH CHUCK HOW TO THROW A PROPER FASTBALL!
WHY HIM?!
HE HELPED SAVE ME, DIDN'T HE?
HE DID. BUT YOU EVER WONDER HOW HE KNEW WHERE THE KLAN TOOK YOU?
HE WAS AT OUR HOUSE THAT NIGHT, TOMMY! WEARING A HOOD! HE WAS THE ONE WHO THREW THE BOMB!
I RECOGNIZED HIS BOOTS!
CHUCK...?
...
SHE'S RIGHT.
THAT WAS ME.
LISTEN, I AM SO, SO SORRY. I NEVER WANTED TO HURT YOUR FAMILY. I SWEAR.

I BELIEVE HIM.
WHAT?! ARE YOU SOFT IN THE NOGGIN?!
CHUCK HERE IS A NATURAL PITCHER, ALMOST AS NATURAL AS ME. YOU KNOW HOW BIG OUR WINDOW IS?
WAY BIGGER THAN THE STRIKE ZONE.
SO... YOU MISSED ON PURPOSE?
I DID. LIKE I SAID, I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT YOUR FAMILY. NOT YOU, NOT THE UNITY HOUSE.
I DON'T WANNA HURT ANYBODY.
HOW WERE YOU GONNA HURT THE UNITY HOUSE?
WHAT? I JUST SAID I DIDN'T WANNA HURT THE UNITY HOUSE!
THEN WHY EVEN BRING IT UP? SPILL, CHUCK! IS THAT WHY YOU WERE ALL NERVES BEFORE?
IS THAT WHY YOU SUGGESTED WE COME SEE A MOVIE YOU DIDN'T EVEN WANT TO SEE?
I...I...
HOW DID SUPERMAN PUT IT?
"IF YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP ANOTHER PERSON, YOU OUGHT TO AT LEAST TRY."

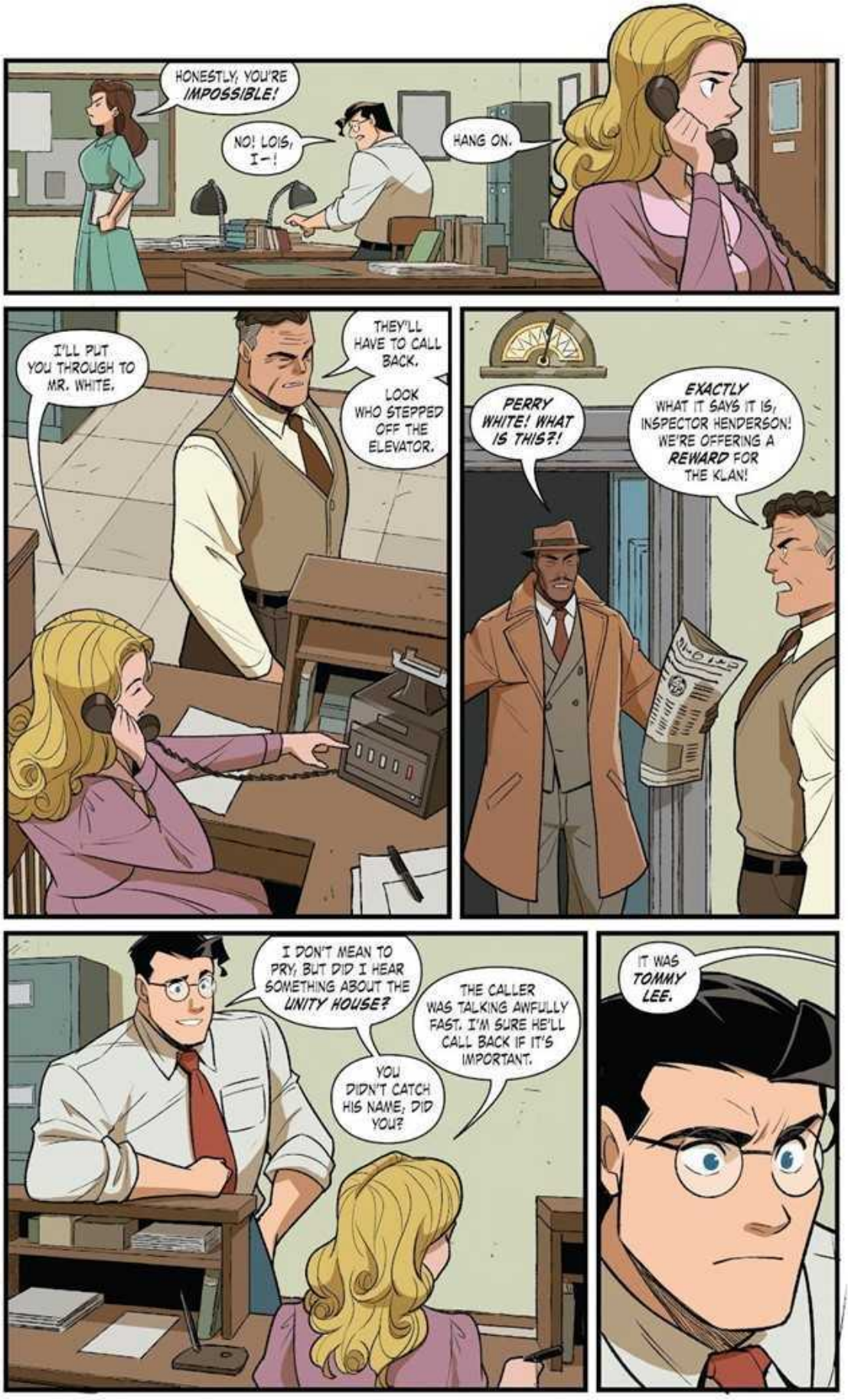
MY UNCLE IS THE GRAND SCORPION OF THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS, OKAY?! HE'S THE ONE WHO BROUGHT ME TO THE MEETING IN THAT SPOT BY THE RIVER.
HIS NAME IS MATT RIGGS.
BUT YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND, HE'S A GOOD GUY DEEP DOWN!
HE MIGHT BE WRONG ABOUT THIS, BUT HE'S BEEN THERE FOR MY MOM AND ME EVER SINCE WE LOST MY...
EVER SINCE WE NEEDED HIM.
NOW, I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE...BUT I'M WORRIED SOMETHING TERRIBLE MIGHT HAPPEN TO THE UNITY HOUSE.
EVEN IF IT DOES, THOUGH, IT'S OKAY, RIGHT? BECAUSE WE'RE ALL HERE NOW!
YOU IDIOT! THE KIDS ARE ALL HERE, BUT WHAT ABOUT REVEREND LEEDS, RABBI STONE, AND FATHER SHAIN?! DID YOU CHECK THEIR OFFICE?
I DIDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT THAT...
THEN WE GOTTA GO BACK TO MAKE SURE!
JIMMY!
COME ON!

THE UNITY HOUSE.
AW, JEEZ.
AND LOOK! THE LIGHT IS ON IN THE CLERGY'S OFFICE!
WHICH ONE OF THOSE CREEPS IS YOUR UNCLE?
MY UNCLE'S NOT A CREEP! AND HE'S NEITHER ONE OF THOSE GUYS!
I KNOW BECAUSE HIS ROBE'S A DIFFERENT COLOR.
BUT...I'M PRETTY SURE HE SENT THEM HERE.
THIS MORNING, I CAUGHT HIM BUILDING A BOMB.

CRIPES!
YOU GUYS GO FIND PAY PHONES! ONE OF YOU CALL THE POLICE, ANOTHER THE DAILY PLANET! TELL THEM BOTH TO GET OVER HERE RIGHT AWAY!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
WE CAN'T LET THOSE KLANSMEN GET AWAY! I'M GONNA TRY TO STALL 'EM, LOIS LANE-STYLE!
WHENEVER SHE DOES IT, SUPERMAN SHOWS UP IN THE NICK OF TIME!
LET'S HOPE HE DOES THE SAME FOR ME!
NOT THE BRIGHTEST PLAN, BUT I GUESS IT'S THE BEST WE'VE GOT!
ROBERTA, WHAT ARE YOU—?!
NO WAY I'M LETTING YOU FACE THOSE CREEPS ALONE! COME ON!
YOU GUYS GET GOING ON THOSE PHONE CALLS!

SHAKE A LEG ALREADY!
WHO—?!
EXCUSE ME, MISTER, UH—
MR. BEDSHEET BIGOT.
JIMMY OLSEN, CUB REPORTER FOR THE DAILY PLANET. THIS IS MY ASSOCIATE ROBERTA LEE.
HELLO.
YOU BRATS DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE MESSING WITH!
OUTTA THE WAY!
WOULD YOU MIND ANSWERING A FEW QUESTIONS?

HERE. A LITTLE SOMETHING TO GET YOU THROUGH THE EVENING SLUMP.
Metro Cafe
IT'S NOT YOUR TURN.
I KNOW.
LOIS, ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE COFFEE SHOP... I'M SORRY.
IF YOU'RE WILLING, I'D LOVE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT YOUR METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATION.
HM.
RING! RING!
LIKE I WAS SAYING EARLIER, I THINK THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND THE—
SLOW DOWN, YOUNG MAN. I CAN BARELY CATCH A WORD. WHAT'S THIS ABOUT THE UNITY HOUSE?
THE UNITY HOUSE...?
CLARK, ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING?


HONESTLY, YOU'RE IMPOSSIBLE!
NO! LOIS, I—!
HANG ON.
I'LL PUT YOU THROUGH TO MR. WHITE.
THEY'LL HAVE TO CALL BACK.
LOOK WHO STEPPED OFF THE ELEVATOR.
PERRY WHITE! WHAT IS THIS?!
EXACTLY WHAT IT SAYS IT IS, INSPECTOR HENDERSON! WE'RE OFFERING A REWARD FOR THE KLAN!
I DON'T MEAN TO PRY, BUT DID I HEAR SOMETHING ABOUT THE UNITY HOUSE?
YOU DIDN'T CATCH HIS NAME, DID YOU?
THE CALLER WAS TALKING AWFULLY FAST. I'M SURE HE'LL CALL BACK IF IT'S IMPORTANT.
IT WAS TOMMY LEE.

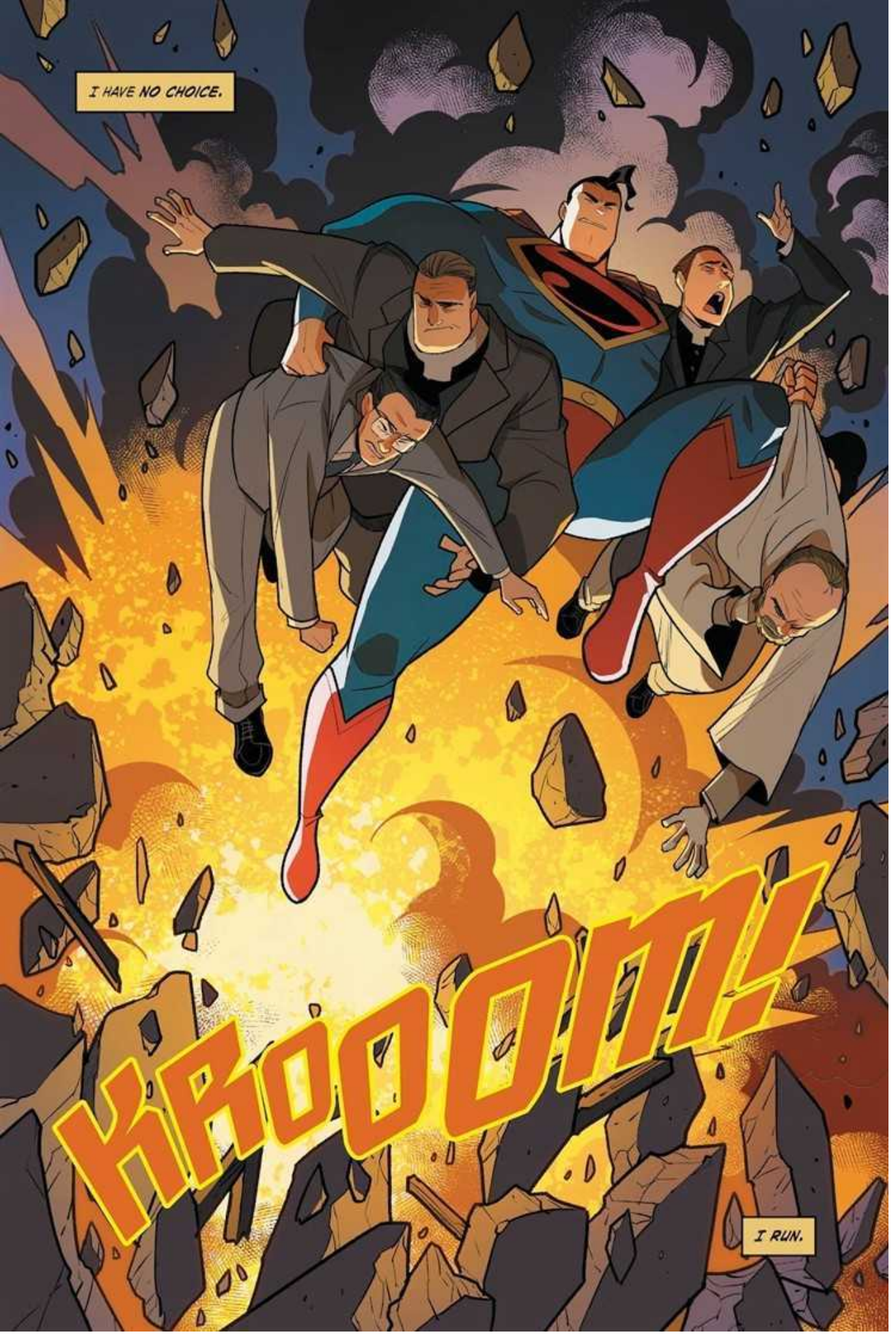
FIRST QUESTION: WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS LOOK YOU'RE GOING FOR?
RACIST POINTY-HEADED GHOST?
RACIST UPSIDE-DOWN ICE CREAM CONE?
RACIST GIANT-SIZED DUNCE CAP?
WE GOT A QUESTION FOR YOU, KID.
WHY WOULD A GOOD 100 PERCENT AMERICAN LIKE YOU PAL AROUND WITH SOME CHING-CHONG?
YOUR MOM TAUGHT YOU NOT TO FEED STRAY DOGS, DIDN'T SHE? WHAT YOU'RE DOING AIN'T NO DIFFERENT!
YOU TAKE THAT BACK BEFORE I—
OW!
WAP!
ROBERTA!
THE CHING-CHONG WANTS TO GET VIOLENT, EH?!
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE OFF YOUR MASK AND CALL ME THAT TO MY FACE?!
YOU KNOW WHAT WE DO TO RABID DOGS HERE IN AMERICA?
WE PUT 'EM DOW—
GRK!

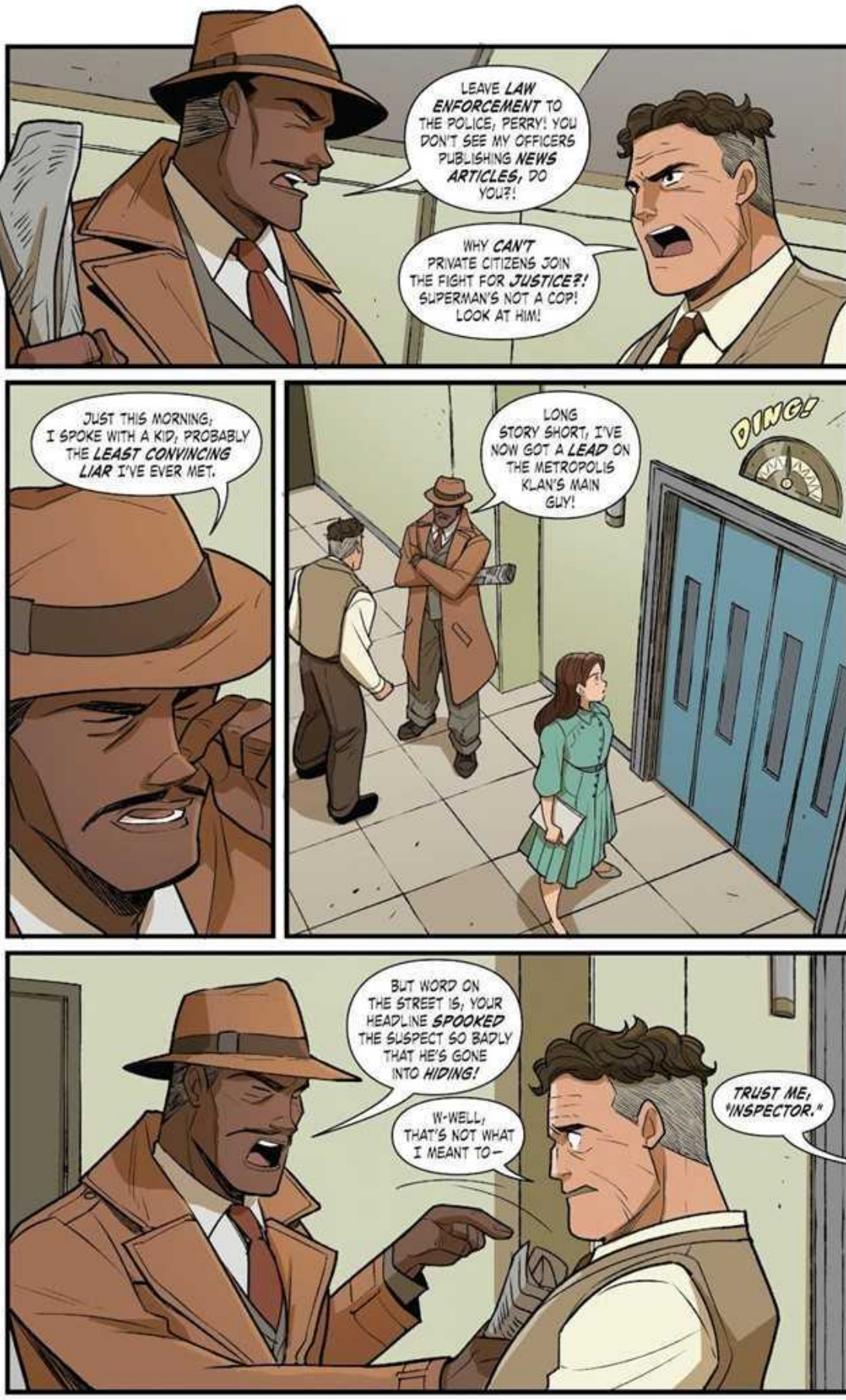
WHAT—?!
SUPERMAN!
WHAT WAS IT YOU CALLED THESE GOONS, ROBERTA?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT.
BIGOTS IN BEDSHEETS.
I KNEW YOU'D SHOW UP, SUPERMAN! I JUST KNEW IT!
YOU HAVE TO HURRY! WE THINK THEY HID A BOMB SOMEWHERE IN THE BUILDING!
YOU TWO GENIUSES DECIDED TO BOMB A CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY CENTER?!
THIS ISN'T A COMMUNITY CENTER, SUPERMAN! IT'S A THREAT TO THE PURITY OF AMERICA!
IF YOU TRULY LOVED YOUR NATION—AND YOUR RACE—YOU WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT!

GAH!
TOSS
I ONLY NEED ONE OF YOU TO FIND THAT BOMB.
D-DON'T LEAVE ME UP HERE!
I WOULDN'T SQUIRM TOO MUCH! WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THAT BRANCH WILL HOLD!
YOU KIDS KEEP A GOOD DISTANCE AWAY, IN CASE I DON'T DEFUSE THE BOMB IN TIME!
KRACK!
YOU'RE SUPERMAN! YOU'RE DEFINITELY GONNA—
GO! NOW!

NOW, I'LL BE FINE NO MATTER WHAT, BUT IF YOU DON'T TELL ME WHERE THAT BOMB IS, YOU'LL BE BLOWN TO BITS.
YOU'RE MAKING A BAD BET, SUPERMAN!
I'D RATHER DIE THAN TELL YOU ANYTHING! IN FACT, I'VE DREAMED OF BEING A MARTYR FOR MY RACE!
HELL, ONCE THEY CLEAN UP ALL THE FILTH IN THIS CITY, THEY'LL PROBABLY PUT UP A STATUE OF ME!
MUFFLED NOISES FROM UPSTAIRS.
RABBI STONE! FATHER SHAIN! REVEREND LEEDS!
GOD BLESS YOU, SUPERMAN!
ARE YOU THE ONLY ONES HERE?!
YES, I BELIEVE SO.

WHERE IS THAT BOMB? I CAN MAKE OUT A TICKING SOUND—
TICK TICK TICK...
—BUT IT'S THE CLOCK. THERE'S TICKING EVERYWHERE, ACTUALLY.
A BUILDING FULL OF CLOCKS.
I NEED TO LOOK THROUGH, THE WAY I FOUND TOMMY.
I TRY TO HEAR THE VOICES AGAIN.
TICK TICK
TICK
I TRY TO SMELL THAT GREEN CRYSTAL SMELL.
TICK
TICK
COME BACK.
PLEASE. I'M SORRY I WALKED AWAY FROM YOU! I NEED...
I NEED YOU RIGHT NOW! I NEED THE POWER TO LOOK THROUGH.
FATHER...? MOTHER...?
HA! IT'S TOO LATE, SUPERMAN, EVEN FOR YOU!
SWEET MARTYRDOM, HERE I COME!
THE FLOOR TREMBLES.
RUMBLE
RUMB


I HAVE NO CHOICE.
KRROOM!
I RUN.


LEAVE LAW ENFORCEMENT TO THE POLICE, PERRY! YOU DON'T SEE MY OFFICERS PUBLISHING NEWS ARTICLES, DO YOU?!
WHY CAN'T PRIVATE CITIZENS JOIN THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE?! SUPERMAN'S NOT A COP! LOOK AT HIM!
JUST THIS MORNING, I SPOKE WITH A KID, PROBABLY THE LEAST CONVINCING LIAR I'VE EVER MET.
LONG STORY SHORT, I'VE NOW GOT A LEAD ON THE METROPOLIS KLAN'S MAIN GUY!
DING!
BUT WORD ON THE STREET IS, YOUR HEADLINE SPOOKED THE SUSPECT SO BADLY THAT HE'S GONE INTO HIDING!
W-WELL, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT TO—
TRUST ME, "INSPECTOR."

ONE RACE! ONE COLOR! ONE RELIGION!
NO ONE IS HIDING FROM THE LIKES OF YOU!

HEY, HOW ABOUT WE SIT DOWN FOR AN INTERVIEW?
"INTERVIEW?" HA!
WHAT A THING TO ASK WHEN YOU'VE GOT A KNIFE IN YOUR FACE!
GET OVER THERE WITH THE REST OF 'EM!
FUNNY. DR. WILLIAM JENNINGS SPOKE IN THE EXACT SAME WAY.
I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW UNBEARABLE IT'S BEEN, WATCHING YOU STRUT AROUND TOWN WITH THAT BADGE PINNED TO YOUR CHEST, BOY!
HAND IT OVER!
OVER MY DEAD BODY.
FINE. HAVE IT YOUR WAY!
NO, DON'T DO IT! KILL HIM LIKE THAT AND HE DIES A COP!
HAND OVER THE BADGE, BOY, OR PERRY WHITE GETS IT!
NRF!

I COULDN'T SAVE THE UNITY HOUSE.
I'VE FAILED.
AM I DEAD...?
I MUST BE!
HA HA!
I STAYED TRUE TO THE VERY END, O LORD! I'M READY FOR MY REWARD!
EXCUSE ME, YOUR FOOT'S ON FIRE.
ACK! THERE ARE JEWS IN HEAVEN?!
NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF MY FAMILY HAD NEVER COME TO METROPOLIS.
YOU CAN'T THINK LIKE THAT, ROBERTA! THIS IS THE KLAN'S FAULT AND NO ONE ELSE'S!

BESIDES, IF YOUR FAMILY HAD NEVER COME, I NEVER WOULD'VE MET YOU.
AND, UH, TOMMY.
YOU AND TOMMY, I MEAN.
JIMMY! MR. WOULD-BE MARTYR HERE BURNED HIMSELF PRETTY BADLY!
WE'LL HAVE TO STOP BY THE HOSPITAL ON OUR WAY TO THE JAILHOUSE! CAN YOU—
OH, MY FOOT! IT BUUURNS!
GIVE ROBERTA A RIDE HOME? YOU GOT IT, SUPERMAN!
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M WONDERING? WHEN THE KLAN SHOWED UP AT MY HOUSE, THERE WERE DOZENS OF THEM. HOW COME ONLY TWO CAME HERE?
MAYBE THE REST OF 'EM WERE BUSY.
BUSY WITH WHAT?
ATTACKING ANOTHER TARGET, MAYBE?
BUT WHAT OTHER TARGET IS—
! !
WAIT! D-D-DON'T JUST LEAVE ME UP HERE!

GASP!
JIMMY...
OH NO...
TO BE CONCLUDED!

SUPERMAN AND ME, PART 2

By Gene Luen Yang

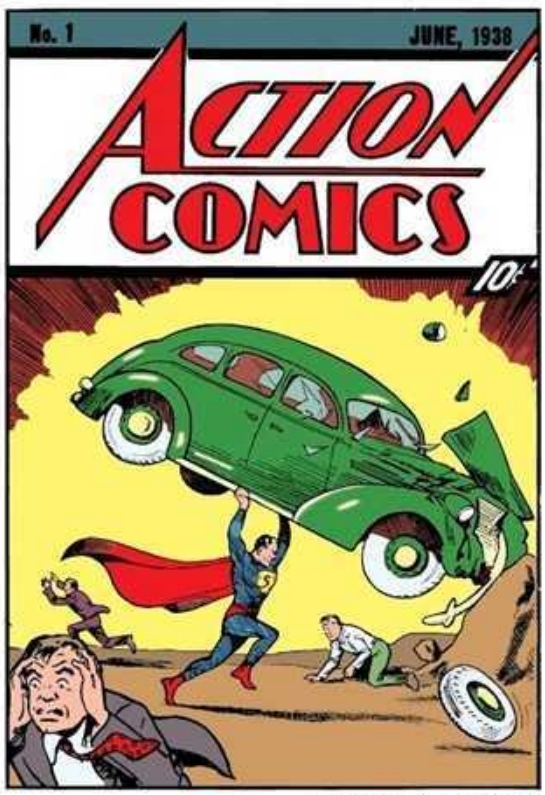


Figure 1. Action Comics #1, cover art by Joe Shuster.

Superman first appeared in 1938, in the very first issue of a comic book series called *Action Comics*. The hero was very different from how he is now. The S emblem on his chest hadn't yet evolved into its familiar diamond shape. He worked at a newspaper called the *Daily Star*, not the *Daily Planet*. Lois Lane was in the office, but Jimmy Olsen and Perry White were nowhere to be seen.

His powers were different, too. He was super-strong and super-fast, but he couldn't fly. He could only leap. He couldn't shoot heat rays out of his eyes or blow freeze breath from his mouth, either. Those would come later.

Superman was created by two teenagers in Cleveland, Ohio, named Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. They were both sons of Jewish immigrants. As white supremacist ideas grew stronger and stronger in Europe, hatred for Jews grew worse and worse. Jerry and Joe's families worried that things would turn violent, so they escaped to America.

To fit in better, both families changed their last names. The Siegels were originally the Segalovichs and the Shusters were the Shusterowichs. Unfortunately, the name change did not protect them from hate. When Jerry and Joe were growing up in Cleveland, it wasn't uncommon for job ads in the local newspaper to say, "No Jews Need Apply."

Figure 2. Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel, creators of Superman, with M. C. Gaines.

Often, Jews could only find work in the roughest parts of town. Jerry's dad ran a secondhand clothing store in just such a neighborhood. When Jerry was 17 years old, someone tried to rob the store. Jerry's dad suffered a heart attack and died.

Jerry and his friend Joe loved stories about aliens, space men, and other planets. They loved them so much that they created their own fanzine called *Science Fiction*.

In the third issue of *Science Fiction*, published in 1933, Jerry and Joe wrote and drew a story titled "The Reign of the Superman," about a man who gets mind-control powers, turns evil, and tries to destroy the world by spreading hateful thoughts. In the end, a do-gooder reporter confronts this evil "Superman" to save the day.

In the five years between *Science Fiction* #3 and *Action Comics* #1, Jerry and Joe came up with several game-changing ideas.

First, they decided to make Superman good. Instead of having mind-control powers like a mad scientist, they made him strong and fast, like a pulp magazine hero.

Second, they dressed him up like a circus strongman. Circuses were very popular back then. Performers wore colorful, skin-tight costumes so that audience members in the back row could still see them.

Finally, Jerry and Joe made Superman an alien from another planet. He would be an immigrant, like their parents, and he would hide his identity underneath a red tie, a white shirt, a blue jacket, and a pair of glasses. He even had another name to fit in better: Clark Kent.

Superman was a hit. Readers flocked to buy his comics. Demand for Superman merchandise was so intense that his publisher had to set up Superman Inc., a subsidiary dedicated to licensing the hero's likeness. Soon, kids all across America were playing with Superman paper dolls, puzzles, and paint sets.

Then on Monday, February 12, 1940, Superman made his way to radio, America's most popular entertainment medium at the time.

It was on the radio that Superman would make one of his most important contributions to America.

By the end of the 1930s, war had broken out in Europe and Asia. Jerry and Joe's parents' worst nightmares came true. German white supremacists called Nazis began to systematically arrest and murder the Jews in their country.

At first, America tried to stay neutral.

Then on December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan, an ally of Nazi Germany, attacked an American naval base at Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii. More than two thousand Americans were killed.

Japan, Germany, and Italy had formed an alliance known as the Axis. Within days, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on all three Axis powers. America had officially entered World War II.

Back then, the United States army observed Jim Crow by separating American soldiers into regiments by race. The army's nonwhite regiments were not as well equipped nor as well supported as the white regiments. Nonwhite soldiers were often passed over for promotions to leadership positions.

This hypocrisy infuriated many Americans. In January of 1942, a young African American named James G. Thompson wrote a letter to the *Pittsburgh Courier*. In it, he expresses how much he wants to serve his country and help America defeat the "forces of evil." But he also asks, "Should I sacrifice my life to live half American?"

He ends his letter by challenging America to fight for two victories: a victory against the Axis powers abroad and a victory against inequality at home.

A double victory.

African Americans enlisted in record numbers, far more than for the first World War. Other nonwhite Americans did, too. They fought in the hopes of James G. Thompson's double victory.

The attack on Pearl Harbor changed things for Chinese Americans in an unexpected way. Almost overnight, our public image flipped.

DC Comics, the publisher of this graphic novel, is named after *Detective Comics*, the company's longest-running title. That's what the letters DC stand for: Detective Comics.

Figure 3. President Roosevelt signs a declaration of war against Japan. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-15185.

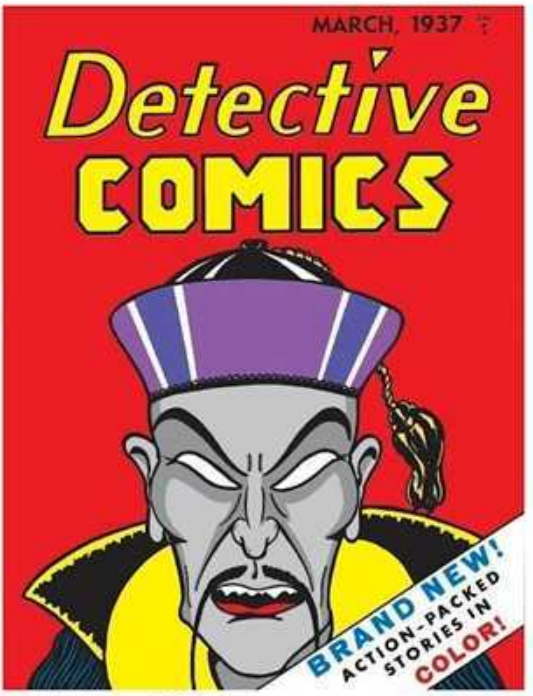


Figure 4. *Detective Comics* #1, 1937.

The very first issue of *Detective Comics* came out in 1937, four years before America entered the war. The cover shows a drawing of a Chinese villain with slanted, demonic eyes and an evil frown. Before Pearl Harbor, this was how many Americans thought of the Chinese: sneaky, criminal, and threatening. If you wanted to buy something illegal, you would go to the neighborhood where all the Chinese people lived.

After Pearl Harbor, America realized that China was its greatest ally against Japan. Suddenly, Chinese Americans weren't sneaky, criminal, and threatening anymore. We became hardworking, loyal, and brave.

Unlike African American and Japanese American soldiers, some Chinese American soldiers were even allowed to integrate into white regiments.

On December 21, 1941, *Time* magazine published an issue about Pearl Harbor. The cover shows a drawing of Yamamoto Isoroku, the Japanese admiral who had masterminded the attack. The artist drew Admiral Yamamoto with slanted, demonic eyes and an evil frown.

The stereotypes that were once applied to the Chinese had been refocused solely on the Japanese.

That same issue of *Time* has an article titled, "How to tell our friends from the Japs." It lists instructions to figure out if a person is Chinese or Japanese. After decades of being villains, the Chinese in America were now friends.

In February of 1942, an executive order signed by President Roosevelt forced Japanese Americans out of their homes and into internment camps until the war's end. It seemed like a reasonable strategy for dealing with a sneaky, criminal, and threatening population.

America did not do the same to its citizens of German or Italian descent.

The Adventures of Superman radio show starred Clayton "Bud" Collyer, one of the most in-demand voice actors of the 1930s and '40s. With his tall frame and thin mustache, he didn't look much like Clark Kent, but because of his uncanny ability to switch from nerdy newspaper reporter to superhero, Collyer became to the first actor to ever play Superman.

The show was a hit. After just two months of episodes, it topped the charts as the highest-rated kids' program in America. Millions of listeners tuned in three times a week, and their hunger for stories encouraged the writers to quickly develop their hero and his world. The show introduced many important pieces of the Superman mythos, including the *Daily Planet*, Perry White, and Kryptonite. Even Superman's powers evolved. He switched from leaping to flying for the first time on his radio show.

During World War II, Superman faced off against Nazi villains like Der Teufel, the Scarlet Widow, and the Atom Man.

Superman spent the war years fighting hate.

On May 8, 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered. Japan surrendered three months later on September 2. America and our allies had won.

The year before, on June 22, 1944, President Roosevelt had signed the G.I. Bill into law. The bill offered the men and women who had served so valiantly in World War II a number of benefits, including money for college and loans to buy homes and start businesses.

Veterans returned home full of hope. This was especially true of nonwhite veterans since the G.I. Bill did not contain any language that excluded them because of their race. After years of sacrifice, the double victory seemed to finally be within reach.

By this time, *The Adventures of Superman* was more popular than ever, with four million listeners per episode, but it needed a new direction. Now that the Nazis had been defeated in real life, Superman couldn't keep fighting them in fiction.

But who was a threat to peace in post-war America?

To be concluded in *Superman Smashes the Klan* part three!